RESPECTING DIVERSITY

ECD+

Co-funded by
the European Union

STRENGTHENING AND SUPPORTING THE EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT WORKFORCE – ECD PLUS

RESPECTING DIVERSITY

Table of Contents

INSPIRING PRACTICES FOR EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE IN ECD FROM AROUND EUROPE

Persona Doll Methodology – Training Manual

Introduction

The selection of the following activities was prepared for ECD Plus Erasmus training by Zsuzsa Laszlo, a certified PD trainer.

Objectives

The purpose of the collection is twofold. First, it is a full-length handout for Persona Doll method for practitioners to use. Second, it is a material where training instructions, tips and facilitators are found.

Structure of the Handout

The Handout contains the following major sections:

- · Introductory training activities
- · Sensitivity - warm up training activities
- · Persona doll - training activities

Source:

Persona Doll Handout – Persona Doll Training Centre, UK

Skills for Persona Doll class activities

SKILL

KNOWLEDGE   ATTITUDE

1. Being open-minded
2. Patience
3. Empathy
4. Knowledge about the culture you are facing
5. Questioning your viewpoint
6. Tolerating ambiguity
7. Knowledge of the stereotypes of the culture you are facing
8. Being aware of your own prejudices
9. Being non-judgmental
10. Flexibility
11. Cultural self-awareness
12. Sensitivity
13. Sense of Humour

The Anti-Bias Approach - Derman-Sparks

The four goals of the Anti-Bias Approach by Derman-Sparks are:

1. Identity and Self-Respect:

To nurture each child and each adult: building up a knowledge of confidence, group identity, and self-identity that does not involve feeling superior to anybody else.
 Each child will demonstrate self-awareness, confidence, family pride, and positive social (group) identities.

2. Empathy:

To promote in each child and adult a comfortable, empathetic interaction with people from diverse backgrounds: this has to do with both information and emotional attitudes and feelings.
 Each child will express comfort and joy with human diversity, accurate language for human differences, and empathetic, just, and caring interactions with people from diverse backgrounds.

3. Unlearning Negative Attitudes:

To guide each child's and adult's critical thinking about the various kinds of bias in society: to learn to identify, challenge and eliminate those that are unfair.
 Children will develop critical thinking skills about the various kinds of bias in society: to learn to identify, challenge and eliminate those that are unfair. They will increasingly recognise unfairness, have language to describe unfairness, and understand that unfairness hurts.

4. Problem-posing/Activist Approach:

To help each child and adult to develop the confidence and skills to stand up for herself or himself and for others in the face of unfair, biased behaviours.

Each child will demonstrate empowerment, and the skills to act, with others or alone, against prejudice and/or discriminatory actions. This is an activist goal, to teach that people working together can create change and build a more just community - even in the classroom.

Persona Doll training methodology

Key message of PD method

Early childhood practitioners can make difference in this life of young children by empowering them to combat discrimination, develop emotional literacy and empathy, and open up to otherness!

Goal of the Persona Doll training

To empower preschool educator and/or practitioners and paraprofessionals, working in early childhood services and programs to challenge discrimination and biases with young children and to promote equality and inclusivity.

Expected outcomes: After the training, practitioners will gain skills and knowledge to be able to:

· Feel empowered to discuss with children "sensitive topics", such as poverty, disability, exclusion, rejection, fear, violence etc.

· Empower children to critically think and openly talk about their feelings and to resist biases, stigmatization, and discrimination.

· Enhance the psychosocial life of young children and build community in the classroom.

Training approach

The training is strongly based on Persona Doll approach that is an effective way to help children ages 2-7 to explore and confront bias. Persona Doll practice originates in Great Britain and is widely used all over the world; in Europe (the Netherlands, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Croatia etc.), South Africa and Australia.

The method provides a powerful, non-threatening and enjoyable way to raise equality issues and counter stereotypical and discriminatory thinking with young children. The dolls help children to express their feelings and ideas, think critically, challenge unfair treatment, and develop empathy with people who are different from them. The method

offers an effective tool to talk about issues like, racism, culture, gender, and other equality issues. Teachers like its simplicity and the hands-on experience it offers.

Persona Dolls are not ordinary dolls; nor are they puppets. Practitioners, by giving them their own individual personas, change them from being inanimate objects into 'people' with individual personalities, family, cultural and class backgrounds, names, gender, and ages. To ensure that the personas they create are detailed and authentic, practitioners include important facts such as where the Dolls live and sleep, the language(s) they speak, their likes and dislikes; the things they are good at and the ones they find difficult, the things that make them happy and those that upset, frighten, and worry them, the length of time the family has been in this country, if relevant and its refugee or Gypsy/Traveller experiences. When developing personas especially for Dolls from cultures with which practitioners are unfamiliar, they make sure that they give them appropriate names and pronounce them correctly.

The training starts with self-reflection activities on diversity and ends with direct experiences in using Persona Dolls. On the morning of the third day participants visit one kindergarten in the area and a teacher who is very experienced with working with Persona Dolls. Participants get video materials on sessions with Persona Dolls in different settings and instructions on how to make dolls.

Persona Doll training expectations

It is suggested to map training expectations of participants before or at the beginning of the trainings. If you do it before, you save time during the training.

Objectives

To make sure they know what they will receive from the trainings. To build confidence in the participants.

Description

Give each participant 3 different coloured post-it notes (e.g. green, yellow, and pink)

Ask them to write their answers for the following 3 questions, one on each post-it:

1. *What do I expect from the training? (green)*
2. *What do I don't want in the training? (yellow)*
3. *What are my strengths, experiences that I can bring into the training? (pink)*

Ask participants to put the post–its on the wall (or on 3 flipchart papers). In an online session: ask them to put it in the Chat or use Mentimeter, an online platform (www.mentimeter.com).

Summarize the content of the answers, discuss the ideas, and provide answers to ALL raised concerns and questions.

To act or not to act

Description

In small groups, take turns talking about a time when you were involved in or witnessed a discriminatory incident relating to adults (not children). A discriminatory incident is an incident, which is perceived to be discriminatory by the victim or any other person. Some incidents may be clearly identifiable as discriminatory and unfair, while others may be less obvious.

They could involve for example:

Discrimination	**Teasing**
Exclusion	**Stereotyping**
Harassment	**Being marginalized/ignored**
Physical attack	**Jokes**
Name calling	**Patronizing attitude(s)**

There is an obvious difference between being the observer and being the target. It is vital that everyone is sensitive to the feelings that this might arouse and to give the necessary support.

- What action was taken?
- What were the obstacles that stopped people from acting?

As a second round, now take turns talking about a time when you were involved in or witnessed a discriminatory incident relating to children.

Discrimination	**Teasing**
Exclusion	**Stereotyping**
Harassment	**Being marginalized/ignored**

Physical attack   **Jokes**

Name calling   **Patronizing attitude(s)**

- What action was taken?
- What were the obstacles that stopped people from acting?

Source: Persona Doll Handout – Persona Doll Training Centre, UK

Where do you belong?

Description

Think about which side of the Universe you are from. Then look around and analyse if you are a minority of a majority, in a certain sense. Look how many new circles you find yourself in after each question.

· Morning drinks (coffee-tea-other)

· Eating habits (vegetarian, meat lover, etc.)

· Commuting to work (30 minutes, 60 minutes, more than 60 minutes)

· Evening person - morning person

· Cooking skills

· Sparkling or still water

· Pizza slice – eat the whole of it or leave the crust (or does not eat pizza)

· Where do you open a banana

· Book or e-book

· Rubik cube

· How do you put ketchup on your food (circles or zigzag)

· Keep your phone Muted / Vibrated / with Sound during the day

· Dark chocolate or milk chocolate

· Coke or Pepsi (or none)

· Alarm: Stop or Snooze

Debate

Description

1. Individually consider these statements, decide which ones you agree and disagree with and which ones you are undecided about. Then rank those that you agree with in order of importance.

2. Compare your responses with the others in your group. Which statements created the most controversy?

> 1.   *Young children don't have prejudices. It is us adults who teach them to be prejudiced by emphasizing differences between people.*
>
> 2.   *Young children learn which toys boys should play with and which ones are appropriate for girls.*
>
> 3.   *We violate children's innocence and intensify conflict when we encourage them to explore and discuss equality issues.*
>
> 4.   *Young children are aware of differences in skin colour. It can affect the way they relate to other children.*
>
> 5.   *You can't expect young children to develop positive attitudes towards others unless they feel good about their culture and identity.*
>
> 6.   *Children need positive inputs. It's not good for them to see pictures depicting poverty, hunger or war or to talk about these kinds of issues.*

3. Make a group decision about whether you agree or disagree with the statements.

Source: Persona Doll Handout – Persona Doll Training Centre, UK

Creating Personas

Description

In your small groups choose a Doll and create a detailed persona for it.

- · its family
- · its cultural background
- · where it lives
- · where it sleeps
- · the language(s) it speaks
- · the things it likes to do and those it doesn't like
- · the food it likes and the food it doesn't like
- · the things it's good at and the things it finds difficult
- · its fears
- · recent history – if appropriate

When the group has worked out the details of the Doll's persona spend a few minutes individually thinking about your particular group of children and how you would, if necessary, amend the persona to reflect them.

During feedback somebody from each group will tell the other groups about their Doll's persona i.e. introduce their Doll.

You will have the opportunity to share what you felt when you were developing your Doll's persona and to talk about any issues that came up for the group and for you personally.

Dolls With a Story to Tell[1]

Description

In the same groups as previously, discuss how you would present the Doll and the questions you would ask to refresh the children's memories. Specify age group.

Work out how you would introduce and develop an anti-discriminatory scenario- perhaps one that you have witnessed in your workplace or experienced as young children. You could refer to the equality issues prompt sheet assembled earlier. You will also need to consider how you will wind up the session.

Take turns in your group with different people taking the role of the member of staff and the rest of your group being the children – remember it is an interactive session so the 'children' need to respond accordingly.

· The Doll sits on the practitioner's lap and she talks for it. Encourage the children to become friends with the Doll and to develop empathy with it – to put themselves in the Doll's shoes. Arouse everyone's interest by asking open-ended questions e.g. What do you think…? Do you ever feel…? What would you do if…? Get the 'children' to participate as much as possible – encourage them to share experiences and ideas and to listen to each other without interrupting.

Think about the skills and attitudes that children could be learning to help them achieve the Early Learning Goals (or your equivalent) particularly those relating to personal, social, and emotional development.

Agree who will tell the story during the feedback session. This feedback is very important because many of the joys and difficulties involved in this work are likely to be highlighted.

FEEDBACK: After each group has presented their Doll and its story, people talk about what they felt when they were in the role of the practitioner, when they were the children and share issues that came up.

---

[1] Source: https://personadoll.uk

Glossary

Categorization

The process by which people are grouped into categories based on characteristics shared by members of the same group and features distinguishing the members of one category from those of another.

- *E.g.: There are Italians and there are Koreans in the group.*

National Characteristics

There are general personality characteristics attributed to the people of a certain nation. Although culture has a recognized effect on character formation, the idea of a national character is not generally considered a useful construct, as it invariably consists of an unexamined stereotype.

- *E.g.: Italians are louder than Koreans.*

Stereotype

Stereotypes consist in shared beliefs or thoughts about a particular group of people. A stereotype is an ensemble of characteristics that sums up a human group usually in terms of behaviour, habits, etc. The objective of stereotypes is to simplify reality: "they are like that". Stereotypes are usually based on some kind of contact or images that we have acquired in school, through mass media or at home, which then become generalised to take in all the people who could possibly be linked.

- *E.g.: Italians are always late.*

Prejudice

A prejudice is a judgement we make about another person or other people without really knowing them. Prejudices can be negative or positive in character. Prejudices are learned as part of our socialisation process and they are very difficult to modify or eradicate. Therefore it is important that we are aware that we have them.

- *E.g.: Anti-Italian prejudice in the United States in the early-twentieth century. They were being associated with organized crime.*

Discrimination

- The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of race, age, sex, or disability.

- *E.g.: When a non-Italian employer does not employ an Italian.*

Source: https://dictionary.apa.org/

Agenda of a 2+1day workshop

Day 1

9.00 – 10.30	Welcome, Introduction, basic activities on diversity issues
10.30-10.50	*Coffee break*
10.50-12.20	More activities on diversity (D.I.E., Constructive Listening, Debate Statements)
12.20-13.10	*Lunch*
13.10-14.40	Introduction to Persona Doll Methodology
14.40-15.00	Coffee break
15.00-16.30	Creating Personas (group work)

Day 2

9.00 – 10.30	More activities on diversity (Leila and Mohammed, ID onion)
10.30- 10.50	*Coffee break*
10.50-12.20	Working with the dolls + films
12.20-13.10	*Lunch*

13.10-14.40	Working with the dolls + films
14.40-15.00	*Coffee break*
15.00-16.30	Working with the dolls + films

Day 3

9.30- 11.30	*Kindergarten visit*
12.00-13.00	Action Plans

Persona Doll Methodology

Source: https://personadoll.uk

1. Introduction to Persona Doll Methodology

Persona Dolls are small friends (Brown, 2001) who visit the children and share stories about what is happening in their lives. These stories introduce discussion of potential problems and difficult situations. The Dolls give children opportunities to think flexibly and critically and encourage their ability to problem-solve and to develop empathy and a sense of fairness. Originally, paper and cardboard Persona Dolls (Taus, 1987) were used to represent children, but these were gradually replaced by large (about 70-cm tall), soft Dolls made of cloth. Persona Dolls mimic humans. They are male or female, with differences of skin colour, hair, and facial features; some wear spectacles, some use wheelchairs; and others are able-bodied. The Dolls are relatively easy to make14 (Smith, 2006) and can be made by volunteers and by businesses. In many ways they are similar to other dolls.

The power of the PDA lies not in the Dolls themselves but in how they are introduced to, and used with, children. Persona Dolls are given identities and personalities. Taus originally intended that the Dolls would reflect the physical characteristics, identities, lifestyles, and circumstances of the children in her classroom. They would have a family and friends and live in a specific area in a specific house or apartment, and their identities would not change any more than for real children (Taus, 1987).

Establishing a relationship between the children and a Doll is the first phase of the PDA (Brown, 2001). This is done by developing a dialogue that explores similarities and differences between the children and a Doll, as well as opinions and feelings about the Doll and what is happening in the children's lives. Once the children have a relationship with the Doll, issues or themes relating to equality are introduced through stories about the Doll's experiences. The stories may be based on classroom realities or on broader issues in the community. These open-ended, interactive, problem posing sessions allow children the space to express their feelings and thoughts about the Doll's problem, to

empathise, solve problems, and develop an activist attitude around diversity and injustice (Brown, 2001; 2008; Derman-Sparks et al., in press).

In common with many other anti-discrimination interventions, the PDA is grounded in the belief that children are not born with negative attitudes and values but learn these and can unlearn them. Numerous studies have shown that children learn by observing differences and similarities among people and absorbing spoken and unspoken positive and negative 'messages' about those differences (Katz, 1976; Milner, 1983; Aboud, 1988; Glover, 1991; Derman-Sparks, 1992; Siraj-Blatchford, 2000; MacNaughton, 2001).

The underlying assumption of the PDA is that challenging prejudices will bring about unlearning and reduce discrimination and the damaging effects, not only on those who suffer discrimination but also on those who discriminate. Any intervention to reduce discrimination is of interest to those who care about equality and the reduction of prejudiced attitudes. However, as Brown (2001) points out, there is a lack of research on the use of Persona Dolls. Thus, the question of whether the PDA is effective in combating discrimination has not yet been satisfactorily answered. It is beyond the scope of this study to evaluate the effectiveness of the PDA, but I will examine the limited research that exists on its use and efficacy.

- The dolls help children to express their feelings and ideas, think critically, challenge unfair treatment, and develop empathy with people who are different to them. Emphasis should be always on introducing differences and increasing tolerance.
- The Dolls and their stories are powerful tools for exploring, uncovering, and confronting bias.
- Persona Doll is a methodology for pre-school practitioners using 60 cm long fabric dolls in the classes.
- The dolls have their own individual personalities, life histories likes-dislikes.
- Children quickly accept them as friends they share their joys and sympathize with them when they are sad.

2. Create the doll with personality.

Think about your own stereotypes (we all have some) and check that they're not being reinforced. The whole staff team needs to agree on the gender, ethnicity, class, family structure, type of home, religion, cultural background, languages spoken, physical features, skin colour, special abilities, and disabilities, likes and dislikes, of each of the Dolls. Names should fit their personalities and cultural backgrounds. These basic details remain constant though circumstances may change, e.g. a new baby, moving house. The persona for each Doll needs to be written down in her/his book and all the stories created around her/him, added.

- The dolls must reflect the children of the current group.
- As a preventive measure, it is possible to introduce dolls that do not reflect the specifics of a specific group of children.
  - *family*
  - *cultural background*
  - *name*
  - *gender*
  - *age*
  - *characteristics*
  - *likes, dislikes*
  - *fears*
  - *desires*
  - *etc.*

3. About the main rules

- Dolls belong to teachers.
- Dolls don't speak, they whisper to teacher and the teacher tells the children what she says.
- Dolls are different in size from the usual dolls one can buy in the shops.
- Dolls do not stay in the classroom.

- Dolls have „human" problems.

- Dolls are classmates, not toys.

- Dolls are not puppets.

- The dolls should be allowed to be touched and hugged, but should not be played with

4. Making the dolls

As Dolls that accurately represent a range of skin colours and physical features are not generally available, you may have to make them. In any case many people prefer cloth Dolls because they are likely to be unique and special - different from the dolls in the home corner. Another advantage is that they are cuddlier and more huggable.

It is a good idea to keep the body pattern simple. The stuffing should be loose enough to ensure that the Dolls can sit and bend their arms but their necks should be firm so that they can hold their heads up. When selecting the stuffing, keep health and safety factors in mind.

The Dolls can be any height but 30 inches is a good size for children to identify with and clothes are easy to get hold of. Clothes can be made or bought from charity shops and markets or donated by parents - tiny jeans, t-shirts, sweatshirts, dresses, and coats are made for little babies these days and will fit the dolls. Choose clothes and accessories that reflect the personal qualities of the Dolls and the children in the group. Have a supply of extra clothes so that the Dolls don't always wear the same ones when they come to tell their stories!

To get appropriate skin colours choose fabrics ranging from ebony brown to pinkish beige. Hair too must be appropriate and be able to stand up to a certain amount of handling. Hot glue dries fast and clear. It may be possible to buy curly hair in a couple of colours from craft shops. A thick head of hair can be produced by putting the individual strands as close together as possible. Beads and other hair ornaments can be added.

Any doll can become a Persona Doll – all that's needed is to give it its own individual persona and so transform it into a person – a valued member of the group. Many people prefer cloth dolls because they are huggable, likely to be unique, special, and different from the dolls in the home corner. It's a good idea to introduce a boy Doll first to capture the attention of the boys and because children often think all Dolls are girls and only for girls. Having boy Dolls provides an opportunity to break down stereotypes the children may have absorbed, for example, by having pink as a boy Doll's favourite colour.

5. Choosing the doll

The Dolls need to reflect the children in the group. However, where all the children are from the same ethnic or cultural group, speaking the dominant language and having no obvious disabilities, it is important to introduce Dolls that do not reflect the children. For example, if there are no children with a hearing impairment one of the Dolls could tell the children about how happy she/he is because she now has a hearing aid and later a story could be told about being teased or excluded. Stories like this can help children respect those who are different from them and appreciate the many things they have in common, e.g. they all have eyes, skin, and hair even though the colour, shape and texture may be different.

6. Planning ahead

We suggest to:

- Informing other teachers
- Involving parents
- Prepare the story.

A reminder:

- It is very important to talk about both happy and sad events related to dolls.

- The first meeting introduces the doll and compares the similarities and differences with the children - helps the children to identify.

- In the second meeting, the doll tells a story that the children analyse and find a solution.

- Stories should be documented, along with children's opinions in the puppet book.

- Dolls from Black, mixed parentage, Gypsy/Traveller, and refugee families or those with disabilities need to be in settings even if there are no children from these families or children who are disabled in the setting.

- Before introducing the Dolls into the setting, practitioners need in-depth discussions to raise issues, achieve consensus and commitment.

- Create stories that relate to children's lives, that they will enjoy, participate in, and learn from.

- When first working with the Dolls, introduce lots of happy scenarios before unhappy ones - continue to intersperse happy ones with those that pose emotional and social problems.

- During story telling sessions encourage all the children to contribute, listen, acknowledge, and respond to their input.

7. Persona Doll Sessions

Phases of a Persona Doll session:

1.   TRUST: Build the relationship between the children and a Doll.

2.   CREATE: Introduce issues or themes relating to equality through stories about the Doll's experiences.

3.   FEEL: The children empathise and share their own feelings and thoughts about the Doll's problem, as well as their own problems, which may be related.

4.   THINK: In the problem-posing, interactive phase, children are encouraged to think critically and develop an activist attitude to unfairness and injustice.

With the Doll sitting on your lap and in your everyday speaking voice you tell the children what the Doll has come to tell them about a particular situation, experience or feeling. You then change your role and become a facilitator. You and the children have a conversation about what has happened to the Doll, how she/he is feeling and what can be done to help if she/he needs support. You give the children space to do most of the talking. Listen carefully and actively to each child's contributions, repeat them to ensure that everybody has heard them and support children when necessary. Open-ended questions capture the children's interest and encourage them to reflect critically on what they and their peers have said. The stories need to reflect happy events and situations as well as discriminatory, unhappy experiences. Children are concerned about the Dolls and eager to help them especially when the stories highlight situations or experiences that they consider are unfair.

Stories can help children appreciate that they are not alone – that others are in the same or similar situations, experiencing the same or similar painful feelings. How the Dolls deal with their problems can help children learn coping skills.

8. Wrapping up the story

Weave in the children's contributions, especially those that most closely match what you hoped the children would learn. Keep the ending of a story short and simple. If it has been an unhappy one, reassure the children that the Doll is feeling much happier and that she/he thanks them for their advice. This can help them feel good about themselves and about being part of the group.

Some practitioners provide a special chair for the Dolls to sit on when their story has been told so they can be cuddled and talked to particularly by those children who have had strong emotional reactions to the stories or who have had similar experiences.

The Dolls and their stories develop children's understanding of fairness and unfairness, their ability to empathise and the confidence they need to be able to stand up when they experience or witness unfairness and prejudice.

Questions after introducing the story:

1.   *What happened?*

2.   *How do you think s(he) is feeling?*

3.   *What do you think (s)he should do?*

4.   *What can (s)he say to those children?*

5.   *What do you think would happen if….?*

6.   *Did something similar happen to you?*

7.   *Did you see it happen to someone else?*

8.   *What would you do it differently now?*

9. Story examples

Children's Dispositions and Attitudes

Nyla is upset today because she wanted to join in the group playing with the new tea set in the Home Corner. She sat on the rug, watching all the children setting out the cups and saucers. She felt very sad because she longed to go to the tea-party, but she was worried that someone would say that she couldn't play.

Have you ever felt like this?

What made you feel better?

How can we help Nyla?

Children's Self-confidence and Self-esteem

Peter is worried because every time he plays in the sand, some children take the sand toys away from him. He doesn't know how to stop it happening. Now he doesn't go to play in the sand unless there's nobody else there.

Has this happened to you?

How did you feel?

How can we help Peter?

Making Friends

Leanne likes to play with her friend Keeley all the time. Sometimes Keeley goes to play with other children and Leanne feels really left out. Last time this happened, Leanne got so upset that she kicked the child that Keeley was playing with and she got into a lot of trouble.

Have you got a best friend?

How does it feel when they want to play with somebody else?

How can we help Leanne?

Behaviour and Self-control

Ross doesn't enjoy tidying up. When it's tidy time he goes and finds something else to play with and leaves the tidying to the other children. Sometimes the other children tell the teacher about this and she tells him off.

Have you ever done this?

What would happen if all the children did this?

How can we encourage Ross to do his share of tidying?

Self-care

Mohammed worries that he can't put his own coat on. Most of the other children in his group can, but he can't. He just can't work out how to put his arms in the sleeves. Sometimes he doesn't go out to play if he's got to put his coat on.

Is there something you can't do?

How does it feel?

How can we help Mohammed?

Refugee

His family is refugees from Syria. They had a very difficult journey here. They now live in a small flat in Hull. Abdul is just 5, but his family often remind him about the big garden where his family used to live in Syria, and he does not know where his grandparents are now – _they all used to live together. His Mum and Dad and older sister talk about them a

lot and wish they could find them. It makes Abdul sad. He is worried as he has just started school and doesn't know anyone there. The children in the class bond with Abdul and love helping him if he feels sad or worried.

How does it feel?

How can we help Abdul?

Refugee

A nursery practitioner created a persona and background for a Doll called Salma who is 4. Salma lives with her mother, grandmother, and her older brother and sister. She has not seen her father since they left Iran two years ago. No-one in the family knows where he is. She loves her (imagined) nursery and her teacher, Gemma. She is beginning to make friends at nursery but sometimes people in the street say nasty things to her Mum as her mum was hurt and has to walk with crutches now. Sometimes children at nursery say her Mum talks funny and walks funny. The practitioner asks the children.

How does it feel?

How can we help Salma?

11. List of feelings:

Happy	Powerful	Sad	Confused
bubbly *cheerful* *content* *delighted* *ecstatic* *glad* *joyful* *loved* *merry* *peaceful* *pleased* *satisfied* *silly* *terrific* *wonderful*	*ambitious* *bold* *brave* *certain* *courageous* *determined* *empowered* *mighty* *strong* *superhuman* *sure*	*blue* *depressed* *disappointed* *down* *gloomy* *heartbroken* *hopeless* *miserable* *unhappy* *upset*	*doubtful* *dumbfounded* *indecisive* *jumbled* *mixed-up* *perplexed* *tense* *uncertain* *unsure*

Pledge against bias and discrimination

- I pledge from this day onward to do my best to interrupt prejudice and to stop those who, because of hate, would hurt, harass, or violate the civil rights of anyone.
- I will always try to be aware of my own biases against people who are different from myself.
- I will ask questions about cultures, religions, and races that I don't understand.

- I will speak out against anyone who mocks, seeks to intimidate, or actually hurts someone of a different race, religion, ethnic group, or sexual orientation.

- I will reach out to support those who are targets of harassment.

- I will think about specific ways my school, other students, and my community can promote respect for people and create a prejudice-free zone.

- I firmly believe that one person can make a difference and that no person can be an "innocent bystander" when it comes to opposing hate.

Source: Caryl Stern-LaRosa, Ellen Hofheimer Bettmann (2000), Hate Hurts: How Children Learn and Unlearn Prejudice.

Scholastic Paperbacks

Persona Doll Methodology - Handouts

INTRODUCTION

Goal of the Persona Doll training

The aim is to provide preschool educators, practitioners, and paraprofessionals in early childhood programs with the tools to confront bias and discrimination in their work with young children, while also promoting equality and inclusiveness.

Anticipated outcomes of this training include enabling practitioners to:

- Engage in discussions with children on sensitive subjects like poverty, disability, exclusion, rejection, fear, and violence, feeling empowered to address these topics.
- Empower children to think critically and openly express their emotions, helping them resist biases, stigmatization, and discrimination.
- Improve the psychosocial well-being of young children and foster a sense of community within the classroom.

Training approach

The training is firmly rooted in the Persona Doll approach, a highly effective technique for assisting children aged 2-7 in exploring and addressing bias. Originating in the United Kingdom, Persona Doll practice has gained widespread global usage in various regions, including Europe (countries like the Netherlands, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Croatia, etc.), South Africa, and Australia.

This method offers a potent, non-intimidating, and enjoyable means of introducing equality-related topics and countering stereotypical and discriminatory thoughts among young children. Through the use of these dolls, children are enabled to express their emotions and thoughts, engage in critical thinking, challenge unjust treatment, and cultivate empathy for individuals different from themselves. It serves as a valuable tool to facilitate conversations on issues such as racism, culture, gender, and other matters of

equality. Educators appreciate its straightforwardness and the hands-on learning it provides.

Persona Dolls transcend mere typical dolls or puppets. By endowing them with distinct individual personas, practitioners transform them from lifeless objects into "people" with their own unique personalities, familial and cultural backgrounds, names, genders, and ages. To ensure the authenticity and richness of these personas, practitioners include significant details such as the Dolls' places of residence and sleep, languages spoken, preferences and aversions, strengths and challenges, sources of happiness as well as distress, fears, worries, and experiences, including factors like the duration of their family's presence in the country and any refugee or Gypsy/Traveller background. In the case of crafting personas for Dolls from unfamiliar cultures, careful consideration is given to selecting suitable names and pronunciations.

The training commences with introspective exercises centred around diversity and culminates in hands-on involvement with Persona Dolls. On the third day, participants have the opportunity to visit a kindergarten, where an experienced teacher adept at working with Persona Dolls showcases their use. Additionally, participants are provided with video resources illustrating sessions involving Persona Dolls in diverse contexts, along with instructions on crafting the dolls themselves.

Handouts content

Whilst we feel that it is essential for the educators, professional support team members and paraprofessionals to first participate in the Persona Dolls use training, before introducing them to the children, parents and groups, we are also providing a set of handouts which can help in preparation of the discussion on the benefits of using Persona dolls, in the development of individual Persona dolls and in planning the groups of activities with children.

HANDOUT 1: Why Are We Doing This?

It is essential that you critically examine the activities and their goals and adapt them to fit your specific cultural and national situation and the age group of the children you are working with. This requires ensuring you adapt the activities to make them developmentally appropriate for the age of the children, building up a pool of stories, rhymes, songs, cultural/religious/historical and/or different tools and activities from your own environment and that of others in order to allow children to be exposed to and become familiar with and accepting of other's perspectives and those who are different.

You, as the practitioner/ teacher/adult are the crucial element of this programme. It is through your ability, capacity, and creativity that this programme will be brought to life. By introducing these elements, by adapting them and building upon them, you will enhance your own knowledge and skills and empower children to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to help them understand, address, and deal with unfairness, bullying, social injustice or conflict in a constructive and meaningful way. This will require that you constantly undergo a process of self-reflection, assessment, monitoring and eventually evaluation of the impact of your activities on children's behaviour, attitudes and understanding.

Children are an integral part of society. They are observing, absorbing, and internalising events and information that they experience. They come to preschool/school with a lot of knowledge and information from their exposure to parents, siblings, neighbours, community members, television, and the Internet. All of these things play a role in shaping their perception and influencing their understanding of events occurring around them (both explicitly and implicitly).

Young children are also "citizens of the world" who are conscious of their roots but open to cultural and geographical horizons with no boundaries (Rinaldi, 2001). If as early childhood educators we wish to reach this goal, we need to help children to learn to accept and understand similarities and differences in others especially in regions affected

by conflict directly or indirectly through the increased numbers of refugees or migrants where unfortunately they get contradictory messages from their surroundings.

We have to expose them to the similarity and commonness of each one of them as well to their uniqueness. Children also need to learn about the reality of different nationalities and communities in their country. If we wish to educate them to develop respect for others who are different, they need to have opportunities to explore the traditions and customs of the different communities they live with. By doing so we give the children tools, knowledge, skills, and dispositions to understand respect, and accept others. Dealing with "accepting others" is not easy in day-by-day life in early childhood programmes and sometimes it feels like a mission impossible living in countries experiencing consequences of different conflicts. However research shows that early years programmes can make a difference to the lives of children and change their perspective towards "others" if they learn empathy and sympathy.

There is a lot in common between solving conflicts in inter-personal relations and in broader circles, such as national, ethnical, and religious which unfortunately is the provenance root of the conflict situation. Therefore, if children understand and experience conflict resolution and peace building at the interpersonal level that is developmentally appropriate, this will set the foundation for understanding social justice, diversity, tolerance, respect, listening and democracy in multiple settings. They will realize that in the world there is legitimacy for arguments and disagreements, and ways to deal with conflicts.

It is our responsibility to create a safe, secure, and protective environment such as the pre-school/school or any informal environment that encourages children to have a broader understanding of conflict, peace, and justice. Exposing children to activities that assist them in understanding and positively embracing cultural diversity and acceptance of others is a role in which you as a practitioner/ teacher/adult can assist the child. The preschool/school child, the family, and you become ambassadors of fairness and understanding.

Main activities

Although the themes are presented in the following order, the intention is that early years practitioners can cover them in whatever way best suits the needs and interests of the children in the setting.

1. **All About Me:** Identity and Belonging

2. **Me and Others:** Awareness of and respect for others

3. **We are all different:** Respecting diversity.

4. **I Feel, You Feel:** Emotional intelligence

5. **Listening to Me and listening to Others:** Self-expression and self-actualisation

6. **Feeling Safe:** Safe and protective environments

7. **Solving Problems:** conflict resolution skills

8. **Feeling Strong:** Resilience

9. **The Place where I Live:** Families and Communities

HANDOUT 2: Some Important Points About Using Persona Dolls

Persona dolls offer a non-threatening, effective and child-friendly way to foster emotional literacy and empower young children.

Persona dolls are special dolls with individual personalities, life experiences, likes and dislikes. Each doll has some kind of family unit and lives in a community.

The Persona dolls tell the children about their good, and not so good, experiences and can be used to explore a lot of issues with young children. This is done through the adult and with the adult using their own voice.

Some important points to consider when introducing persona dolls into the early years setting.

- The personas of the dolls need to reflect the children in the group.
- Where all the children in the group are from the same ethnic or cultural background and have no disabilities etc., it is important to introduce dolls that reflect diversity.
- Once you decide on the identity of the persona doll, it is important that this stays the same.
- The dolls are brought to life by the adult.
- The dolls become small friends that the children identify with
- The dolls and their stories support the children in expressing their feelings and problem solving.
- The dolls support the children to reflect on their experiences.
- The dolls can help the children to deal with their anxieties and fears.
- It is important to have an equal mix of boy and girl dolls.

Areas and issues that can be explored through persona dolls include:

- Emotions – anger, sadness, fear, happiness.

- Empathy.

- Problem solving.

- Unlearning prejudices.

- Respect for difference and for others.

- Listening to children's voices.

- Cultural diversity.

- Children's rights.

- Identity and belonging.

Some practical tips for using the doll/puppets with young children.

- The adult acts as an interpreter for the dolls.

- The adult is not the doll but speaks for the doll.

- Speak in your everyday voice.

- Tell the children that the doll has come to tell them about a particular experience or feeling.

- Invite the children's input.

- Let the children do most of the talking.

- The adult's role is to facilitate the discussion.

- Listen carefully and actively to the children's contributions.

- Support children, when necessary, by asking appropriate questions

- Encourage the children to name the doll's feelings, listen to each other, think deeply, and express their ideas.

- Discussing feelings and ideas is more important than finding important solutions.

- When bringing the doll to life keep the presentation short, informative, and enjoyable.

- The goal is to capture the children's attention so they will be interested in what happens to the doll.

- Briefly explain to the children that the dolls want to discuss something with them.

- Ask leading questions and reflect what the children are saying and pick up on the reactions of those children affected by the situation being discussed.

- Offer support if they feel uncomfortable.

- The ending of a story telling session needs to be short and simple.

- There may not always be a perfect conclusion.

- Weave in the children's contributions especially those that match the aim of the story – what you hoped the children would take out of the story.

Handout 3: All About Me

(Identity and belonging)

Child Focus: Everyone is a 'ME.' There is no one else quite like you. You are quite unique. You are important. You have a name. You can feel hot and cold, happy, and sad, sometimes you are hungry and sometimes you are not, sometimes you are sleepy and sometimes you are full of energy. But you are always you. And you are very special.

Adult Focus*: It is vital that in our work with young children we affirm the unique identity, personality, and interests of every child. This is very important in areas affected by influx of refugees and migrants where in some cases families may be separated or displaced. When working with large groups of children this can be challenging, therefore it is important to have a variety of ways of working with children to include one to one, pairs and small and large group activities. It is also important that the environment for play and learning reflects the identity and interests of each individual; that they can see themselves in the early years setting.*

Two to three lines (as in child focus) that simply introduces the topic in an age-appropriate manner for children works well.

Example questions for discussion:

- We all have a name; do you know how you got your name/ who choose it/ where it comes from?

- What things do you like to do?

- What don't you like to do?

- What makes you laugh?

- What animals do you like?

- Do you have brothers/sisters?

- What do you like to eat?

- What is your favourite game?

- What is your favourite colour?

Using Persona Dolls:

This is a good moment to introduce Persona doll(s). Persona doll(s) also have the name, personality, likes and dislikes. And he/she/they need to get to know the children and become known to them.

Bring the persona dolls, introduce them, and use them to initiate conversation with individual children and get them to share their feelings and experiences and to have the child interact with the persona doll and share the story of the name, likes, dislikes, feelings, and experiences back.

HANDOUT 4: Me and others

(Awareness of the needs of others)

Child Focus: It can be a lot of fun talking to and doing things with our friends, brothers and sisters and other children. It is really good when everyone gets along and is helpful to each other…… it makes us feel happy.

Adult Focus*: Awareness of the needs of others - Children need to develop the capacity to relate and interact with others. They need to develop friendships, get along together, and enjoy imaginative and dramatic play with other children. Supporting social development is one of the most important jobs we have as adults and one of the best ways to support social development is to show good social skills, not just to other adults but to children. Children need to feel heard, valued, respected, and acknowledged. Having good social skills helps a child succeed in life. A child with good social skills gets along with peers and develops sensitivity to the needs of others. The golden rule should be treating the others as you would want to be treated. Children with good social skills are more likely to develop into socially aware adults who value human rights.*

Example questions for discussion

- What things do you do with your friends that make you feel happy?
- Can you think of a time when your friend/s helped you to do something?
- How did this make you feel?
- Can you think of a time when you helped your friend/s to do something?
- How did this make your friend feel?
- How did it make you feel when you helped your friend?
- Has there been a time when someone was hurtful to you?
- How did it make you feel?
- What is your favourite game?
- Do you have friends who like different games?

- What is your favourite sport?
- Do you have friends who like different sports?

Using Persona dolls:

You can use Persona dolls first to talk about things they both like and don't like. This can also be part of introduction of the Persona doll to the group and creating bonds between the children in the group and the Persona doll.

On another occasion, you can use Persona doll to tell the stories about some good/helpful behaviour of them to others or others to them to introduce the topic and prompt children to share their own experiences.

On the following occasion, you can use Persona doll to tell her/his story about an incident of hurtful behaviour that he/she witnessed or experienced. These stories could reflect examples of bullying, name calling or exclusion from play based on the national, ethnic, social background, or based on physical looks, obesity, wearing glasses…, disability or any other characteristic.

You can use Persona dolls to tell stories about feelings associated with being included/excluded from a play situation.

Use Persona dolls to act out scenarios about helpful behaviours and ways to overcome the negative feelings about exclusion with the help of friends, relatives.

HANDOUT 5: We Are All Different

(Respecting Diversity)

Child Focus: Look all around you…what do you see? Some of us have long hair…some have short hair, some have light coloured eyes or dark coloured eyes, some are smiling, and some are not. Some things all of us do…we eat, we laugh, and we sleep. Some things we do differently…we might speak different languages or we are all different in other ways, too**.** We are all different and that is what makes up the world. We might have different hair, eyes, skin colour but we might like doing the same things like swimming, playing, and painting. Even though we are different, each person is special and important.

Adult Focus: *From a young age, children are experiencing and trying to make sense of differences within communities. Research shows that between the ages of two and five children are becoming aware of and curious about gender, race, ethnicity, and disability. Gradually children begin to figure out how they are alike and how they are different from other people and how they feel about those differences. In order to develop empathy, adults should first encourage children to identify similarity, common interests, for example what activities the children enjoy doing in the early years setting or at home before clearly and positively addressing difference for example different celebrations, food, dress. A respecting difference approach is needed when working with young children to challenge prejudice, stereotyping and bias. Adults play a vital role in helping young children to develop positive attitudes to difference.*

Example questions for discussion:

- What colour is your hair?
- Is your hair long or short?
- How many children in the class have black hair/blonde hair/brown hair/red hair etc.?
- How many children have long hair/short hair?
- What colour are your eyes?

- What height are you?

- Do you have light skin or dark skin?

- Does your skin have freckles etc.?

- Do you have brothers and sisters?

- Do you like to play sport?

- Which sports do you like to play?

- What do you do when you are not at pre-school/school?

- Is there anything you like to do that your friends don't like to do?

Using Persona dolls:

You can use Persona dolls to depict different cultures, religions through a story of the Persona doll, or something the Persona doll witnessed or saw. You can put glasses on the Persona doll and create a story about the Doll being told to need wearing glasses for a while, so that you can initiate a discussion on disabilities in a light way. Let the Doll tell her story about what she/he does with her/his family, friends, about festivals or different type of celebrations he/she goes to.

Talk to children about the Doll's experience in a positive way.

Invite children to talk back to the Persona doll about their experiences.

Link to similarities and differences in a positive way.

HANDOUT 6: I Feel, You Feel

(Emotional Intelligence)

Child Focus: Everyone has feelings and emotions. Sometimes we feel happy and sometimes we feel sad. Sometimes we feel frightened or lonely and sometimes we feel angry. It is okay and natural to have different feelings and emotions at different times. Sometimes we need help from others to talk about how we feel or why we feel that way. Talking about how we feel to someone who understands can help us feel better.

Adult Focus*: Young children depend heavily on adults to help them name and express their feelings and emotions. Children can fluctuate from one feeling to another and have difficulty understanding, naming, and expressing their emotions. Adults play a major role in children's ability to identify, understand and express feelings and emotions in a healthy way. Children learn to label their feelings by having healthy emotional expression modelled for them by adults. It is important that adults express their own emotions in a positive way. For example "that is frustrating, I will just have to take a deep breath and start again." It is important to remember that talking about feelings can be difficult. We should also be aware of and acknowledge our own feelings about how we can be affected by a child, a parent or another staff member's feelings and experiences. It is important that children recognise the body language associated with their own feelings and recognise the body language associated with the feelings of others. Children who are able to express their feelings and emotions cope with conflict and problems better and engage in less destructive behaviour than children who do not.*

Example questions for discussion:

- Can you think of something that makes you feel happy?
- Can you remember a time when you felt sad? (Acknowledge children's feelings "that would make me feel sad too.")
- Can you think of a time when you felt frightened?
- Can you think of a time when you felt angry?

- What can you do when you feel sad/frightened/angry? (Who can you talk to?)
- Is there anyone you can talk to when you feel sad/frightened/angry?
- How do you know when your friend/ brother/ sister feels happy/ sad/ frightened/ angry? (Describe the body language e.g. his cheeks are red, and he is clenching his fists, I think he is feeling angry.)
- How can you help if you think your friend/ brother/ sister feels sad/ frightened/ angry? (It is important to help children to develop empathy.)

Using Persona dolls:

You can use Persona dolls to talk about feelings and emotions: today Persona doll is feeling happy, sad, frightened, angry, etc.

You can position Persona doll in your lap in a way that body language depicts different feelings and emotions. Then you can draw attention of the children to different signs of various emotions and feelings that body language shows.

Give an explanation as to why the Persona doll feels happy, sad, angry, or frightened – prepare a story that Persona doll will tell as an explanation of his/her feelings.

You can ask children if they have had a similar experience.

You can invite children to come up with ideas and possible solutions as to how to help Persona doll feel better when scared or angry.

Make sure that Persona doll tells you how children have been helpful.

HANDOUT 7: Listening to Me and Listening to Others

(Self-expression and self-actualisation)

Child Focus: Everyone has their own thoughts and ideas, their own feelings, and emotions. Sometimes you want to share those thoughts, ideas, feelings, and emotions. When you want to share your ideas, it is important to have adults and other children listen to what you have to say. You can express yourself in other ways too like singing, making art, playing, dancing. It is good to be listened to and it is also important to listen to others as well.

Adult Focus: *Children develop their listening skills when you talk with them and expect them to answer. However if we are truly listening and tuning into young children, this is less about answers and more about observing their many ways of communicating verbally and non-verbally - the "100 languages of the child". Useful ways of promoting listening skills include…telling stories to children and have them imagine what will happen next or tell the story back to you, reading stories to children, playing listening games like telling rhymes and having them guess what the last rhyming word is. Listening skills that are forced upon a child, "Listen to me…right now or I have told you this 100 times…" usually don't encourage listening because they are imposed on the child. Encourage a positive desire to listen to others and be listened to by making it rewarding and fun. Listening to young children is very important at times of any disturbing situation.*

Questions for discussion:

- Do we listen with our ears only? (Listening means using our whole body to pay attention to others…using our eyes for looking, our ears for listening, our mind for thinking, our whole body for concentrating.)
- Who are some of the people who listen to you?
- What are some of the things you like to talk to others about?
- How does it feel when no one listens to you?
- Who are some of the people you listen to?

- What can you do to be a good listener? (Look at the person, wait and listen to what the person says without turning away, repeat what the person has said, ask questions if you do not understand something.)
- Why do you think it is important to listen to others? What would happen if you did not listen to others? (mother, father, siblings, teacher, doctor, storeowner, etc.)
- Why do you think it is important to have others listen to you? (What important information do you want to share…what you like, don't like, something that has happened to you, what you want to do.)

Using Persona dolls:

You can use the Persona doll to talk about how he/she felt when no-one listened to him/her or when he/she was afraid to talk.

You can also tell children "Today the Persona doll does not want to talk only to listen to you" and prompt children to talk about their day, or what they liked/disliked that day…

You can also introduce the topic by saying "The Persona doll has a problem she wants the children to listen to". After listening to the story of the Doll's problem, children can give their solution to the problem and listen to the solutions of other children. The doll/puppet tells the children how it feels to be listened to and how helpful the children have been in solving the problem.

Remember you do not have to do a pretend 'voice' for the persona doll/ puppet. They will speak into your ear, and you listen and retell to the children.

HANDOUT 8: Feeling Safe

(Safe and protective environments)

Child focus: We all have the right to feel safe no matter where we are and who we are with. We don't feel safe when there is shouting and fighting or hurtful behaviour. If we don't feel safe, we need to tell an adult who can help us. We need to help others feel safe too by being helpful not hurtful.

Adult focus: *Children grow up in environments that can sometimes be violent and harmful. Children cannot play, relax or express themselves if they do not feel safe. There are many ways we, as adults, can help to make the environment safer and more protected for children. This involves protecting children from exposure to violence by making the physical environment safe. In situations of violence, children can feel also unsafe in their direct environment by being exposed to adults' fears or through watching news coverage on television. It is important that children feel their environment is safe and that there are adults available to protect, listen and reassure them. Children can help to identify those elements of the environment that make them feel unsafe, frightened or threatened. They can also be partners in helping to make the environment safer for all. This teaches them responsibility and how to care for themselves and others.*

Example questions for discussion:

- Where do you feel safe? What makes you feel safe?
- Is there anywhere that you don't feel safe?
- How does that make you feel?
- Where do you see violence happening around you?
- What kinds of behaviours are hurtful?
- How can we be helpful instead of hurtful?

Using Persona dolls:

You can introduce the topic by telling children that Persona doll is crying. He/she is feeling scared because people around her are shouting or crying. Someone has ushed him/her hard and knocked him/her over. Then you could ask children what they would think we could do to help our friend?

Another possibility is to say that Persona doll has just told you that she/he doesn't like sleeping in the dark and then ask children if any of them feels the same. Then you could ask what he/she could do to help him/her feel safe.

You could say that Persona doll heard loud and scary noises outside. He/she thinks it could be a gun or fireworks. Is any other child scared of the loud noises? Who could the Persona doll go to for help?

HANDOUT 9: Solving Problems

(Conflict Resolution skills)

Child focus: We love to play with others; we can have a really great time together. Most of the time we like doing the same things but sometimes we want to do different things and sometimes we don't agree about things. Sometimes we need to work things out.

Adult focus: *Everyday life is full of problems. Problems are not the "problem" it is how we address the problem and the methods that we choose that can lead to positive or negative outcomes. Teachers play an instrumental role in helping children to develop positive problem-solving techniques. This includes identifying and defining the problem, finding a solution that both sides can agree to, helping children to put their solution into practice, and then reflecting on the solution and outcome with the children.*

This is a lengthy process that requires teacher – child dialogue and interaction but is more fruitful in the long run because it provides children with skills, they can use to solve other problems in the future. There are many times, when adults may seek to solve a problem or end conflict by telling children to stop or be good, but words will only temporarily stop the behaviour. Or the adult may impose the solution – time out, telling children they have to share. These approaches are adult driven and do not generate the capacity within the child to be a problem solver. Allowing the child to define the problem, come up with reasonable solutions, and test to see if their solutions work is a long-term strategy that empowers children to be active in changing their own behaviour.

Positive steps to problem solving

The following outlines a strategy that focuses on building the skills of the child as a problem solver. When a problem arises in the early years setting the adult should:

1. **Approach the situation calmly, stopping any hurtful actions.** Position yourself between the children, down at their level; use a calm voice and remain neutral rather than taking sides.

2. **Acknowledge the children's feelings.** Say something simple such as "You look really upset".

3. **Gather information.** Ask "What's the problem?" Do not ask "why" questions as young children focus on that what the problem is rather than understanding the reasons behind it.

4. **Restate the problem:** "So the problem is..." Use and extend the children's own words substituting non-judgemental words for any hurtful words e.g. 'stupid' or 'bad' if needed.

5. **Ask for solutions and choose one together.** Ask "What can we do to solve this problem?" Encourage children to think of a solution but offer options if the children are unable to at first.

6. **Choose a solution together and acknowledge children's accomplishments.** e.g., "You solved the problem!" Stay nearby in case anyone is not happy with the solution and the process needs repeating.

Using Persona dolls:

You can use Persona doll to start the conversation by telling his/her story about how unhappy he/she is because every time he/she goes to play with the building blocks, other children come and take some of the blocks away, so he/she cannot build that big, big tower. You can ask children for some advice, on what he/she is supposed to do.

Another example is that Persona doll is very angry. She is happy flying on the swing and doesn't want to get off. But a girl has come and wants her to get of NOW!!! You can discuss with children what would be the best way to make both the Persona doll and the other child happy.

You can also devise stories that show how Persona doll is very happy because some problematic situation or conflict with other children he/she has successfully resolved. For instance, Persona doll is very happy because she has managed to get many picture books to look at. Could the children guess how she got so many books?

HANDOUT 10: Feeling Strong

(Resilience)

Child Focus*:* Sometimes things happen in our lives that are hard, that can make us feel sad, worried, or afraid. At times like this we all need someone we can turn to who helps us to feel safe and protected. When we know that there are people who love and care for us it helps us to feel strong again.

Adult Focus*: Many children grow up in conditions of adversity and hardship. However there are many children who have the capacity to prevent, minimize or even overcome the consequences of adversity. Factors that have been linked with resiliency in young children include the availability of trusted and caring adults and relationships, a child's sense of his/her own accomplishments, purpose, and self-esteem, the child's own genetic make-up and temperament (i.e. personal vulnerabilities to anxiety, mental health problems), and having people in their lives who demonstrate unconditional love.*

We can enhance resiliency in children by being caring, supportive, and loving role models for children. We can and should help children to acknowledge their own skills and capacities to make a positive difference in the group/setting/classroom or at home which builds their self-esteem, confidence, and agency. Through listening, support, guidance, confidence building and allowing children to be empowered actors, children will be able to be active participants in their environment and this can enhance resiliency.

Questions for discussion:

- Who do you go to when you need help?
- Are there other people who can help you and support you?
- Who makes you feel safe?
- Who helps you to understand what is "right" and what is "wrong?"
- Who sets the rules for you? What kinds of rules must you follow?

- Do you like trying out new things and activities? How do you feel if something doesn't go the way you want it to?
- How can we deal with things when they aren't exactly how we want them to be?
- Can you tell me two things you enjoy doing?
- What kinds of things are you good at doing?
- What kinds of things would you like to learn?

Using Persona dolls:

Use the Persona dolls to talk about how sometimes they don't know what to do, but then use their heads to decide what is good and what might be dangerous. You can use a Persona doll to share feelings and experiences with children. The Doll tells his/her that sometimes he/she is afraid of things happening around him/her. Have the persona dolls speak about times when they are confused or scared and aren't sure exactly what they should be doing. Then she/he seeks out her mummy or daddy or someone very important to them to get their support and protection. He/she wants to know what other children do when they are afraid. Who helps them? Have each child talk to the Persona doll (or whisper in the Doll's ear) what they do when they are afraid or upset. If a child does not want to speak, he/she can pass the Doll on to the next child.

Another activity would be to have the Persona doll tell them a story about a big rain or a storm. It shook the house. He/she was scared. But he/she remembered that mummy and daddy were in the other room. So he/she went to them and they all went around the house together to make sure all the windows were shut, the doors locked, and then they all sat together and told stories to each other. He/she even told her parents a funny joke (have a joke ready)!!! Ask the children to share similar experiences they had when they were able to respond and act in a difficult circumstance...what did they do? Encourage their responses and have them think of other ways to respond in these difficult circumstances.... someone is fighting, there is a big storm, someone gets lost, etc.

Or the Persona doll has a problem he/she wants the children to listen to his/her problem and help him/her solve it…he/she is being bullied on the way home from school, someone is hurting him/her and sometimes he/she feels very lonely…. Children can give their solution to the problem and listen to the solutions of other children.

A story can also be about the Persona doll enjoying giving hugs and getting hugs…it feels good to be loved. Who loves you? (Get children to speak about whom they love and who loves them. This is a good exercise to help identify children who may have problems in their home care environment).

The Persona doll tells the children that sharing our feelings and thoughts with others is good. We can help each other solve problems. We should always seek out help from those we trust and love.

HANDOUT 11: The Place Where I Live

(Families and Communities)

Child focus: Children live surrounded by adults and sometimes other children, who love them and take care of them. This is what makes a family.

Adult focus*: (It is critical that the teacher is sensitive to the individual family situation of the child).*

Children grow up in different family types and in diverse communities. Relationships are among the most important experiences that young children have and they have a particularly strong influence on their social and emotional functions. A child's experiences in the early years also significantly affect the development of the human brain. In times of conflict, families can be separated and this circle of care for the child may be broken. Supportive families, safe communities, adult mentors, and caring teachers are what young children need to feel a sense of belonging and connection. It is important to build a sense of community in an early years setting/school and to help young children to express their feelings, learn to be compassionate, find creative ways to resolve conflict and respect diversity. Early years education builds on family education and children will feel more confident and positive about themselves when parents/carers and practitioners/teachers work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

Example questions for discussion:

- Can you tell us about where you live and who you live with?
- Do you have brothers or sisters?
- Do you have grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins?
- What things do you like to do with your family or the people you live with?
- Where are some of the places you like to go to in your community and why?
- How can we help to make our communities better places to play and live in?
- How can we show our family/people we live with that we care about them?
- What do you like about coming to your pre-school?

- What are your favourite activities in your pre-school?

- Is there anything about pre-school you don't like?

- Do you have good friends at pre-school?

- How can we show our friends at pre-school that we care for them?

- What sorts of things can we do in pre-school to make it a good place for everyone?

Using Persona Dolls:

You can use Persona dolls to talk about their family experiences, going to granny's house, playing with brothers, sisters, cousins, getting into conflict with someone, how this was solved etc.

Persona dolls can talk about their experiences in the community, where they like to go and who they like to go with, people in the community who help them etc.

You can use Persona dolls to engage children in discussions about their experiences in the early years setting.

HANDOUT 12: Working with Families

In order for work with young children to be effective, it is essential to work with parents. When practitioners and parents work together, the results have a positive impact on the child's development and learning. Relationships need to be authentic, meaningful, and respectful.

Benefits of working with families

- Children feel more confident and positive about themselves when parents/carers and practitioners work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect.
- Parents/carers know their child best.
- What parents/carers do at home with children has the most significant effect on their emotional, social, and intellectual development.
- Parents/carers can enhance their child's development whatever their social background.
- What a parent/carer does is more important than the status of the parent/carer
- The impact is evident across all social groups and ethnic backgrounds.

Some practical tips for working with families.

- Engage in regular two-way communications.
- Build parents' confidence on what they already do and support them to build on that.
- Avoid making assumptions about parents.
- Listen to parents as individuals and spend time getting to know family units. Value their views.
- Ask parents what activities or information has been useful to them and what they would like more of.
- Young children's attitudes to diversity are influenced by the behaviour of the adults around them. All families should be welcomed and valued.
- The smile that greets a parent sends a very important message that they are welcome.

- Practitioners need to think about how they are reaching out to the family. We often hear about hard-to-reach parents/carers, but practitioners need to do all they can to let families know they are there for them.

- Staff should be flexible and be able to cope with the twists of everyday family life. If parents/carers need extra support particularly in situations of conflict, staff should have the resources and knowledge where to refer them.

- Involve the parents/carers in how you are working with the children and persona dolls, give them introductory information and tips on the persona dolls' identities, personalities, and background, so that they are able to support the children in the home.

Parents will feel valued if:

- They receive a warm and genuine welcome.

- They do not see other parents being treated better than them.

- Staff know their child well and have a genuine interest in them.

- Staff share their expertise and support them in engaging with the child in the home.

- Staff exchange information about their child regularly.

- There is two-way communication and parents feel listened to.

Inspiring Practices for Diversity Inclusion in ECD from around Europe

"ARTLUDIK" - Italy

Hands-on activities towards the accessibility of pre-primary learning

Target groups:	children from 3 to 10 years old.
Focus:	design services to promote diversity inclusion and the accessibility of ECEC services for all children through playing methodologies.

Objectives: Artludik is a Social Promotion Association that was established approximately three years ago by experts in Early Childhood Education and artists with a specialization in disabilities. The primary objective of the founders remains unwavering: to forge a connection between children and the realm of art and culture by means of storytelling, hands-on craftsmanship, and sensory exploration using various materials. Their commitment involves consistently catering to the diverse needs of every child.

Methodology: The Association arranges imaginative and relaxed educational workshops designed for children. Currently, the attendees primarily come from the local community, yet the future objective is to progressively collaborate more closely with schools. A pivotal asset lies in the capacity to utilize play as an educational tool, effectively transcending any cultural or physical barriers children might encounter. The toolkit encompasses manual dexterity and embraces the Montessori methodology, along with active pedagogy and the "Reggio-Emilia" educational model. The main obstacles entail navigating the challenges posed by the Covid-19 crisis and adapting to the public school environment with a distinct pedagogical approach. The Association serves as a fusion of diverse local and broader experiences.

Impact: With respect to the objective of the schools' involvement, there have not yet been appreciable results; but by participating in national tenders, several have been won. The Association's Facebook page is quite active https://www.facebook.com/ArtLudik

Conclusion: More networking between like-minded organisations is a must towards the Association's growth!

Contact:

Organisation, Town, Country: ARTLUDIK, Rome, IT

Website:

https://artludik.altervista.org/?fbclid=IwAR2t6u3Km2qzAk3g0gEn4jC5eQXdht2cSbc8NoSjN0bApEbPkxDmtEZI

Contact person: Cristiana Bolognesi, co-founder artludiklab@gmail.com

"LIBELA'" - ITALY

LIBELA' is a way of existing, we experience 360° inclusion through art therapy, which is its transversal and contributes to create what we call a "social womb" (quoting F.C.)

Target groups:	Children 0-5 and parents, so to implement paths that can offer a space for relationships.
Focus:	- adaptation / professional / organisational improvement of teachers for the management of disabilities; - services to promote social inclusion and accessibility of ECEC services.

Objectives: LIBELA is an organization established with the primary objective of championing the integration of variations as a central principle, wherein diversity is transformed into an asset for both individuals and the broader community. This association is dedicated to amplifying and acknowledging individual and collective strengths, aiming to foster an environment where personal and communal resources are celebrated and valued.

Methodology: Art therapy is interconnected with music therapy, dance-movement therapy, and various artistic expressions, serving as tools rather than ultimate goals. The current emphasis is on a local-regional scope, where the association provides courses in collaboration with social services and departments focused on social policy. An integral aspect is the harmonious merging of able-bodied and disabled children within the community. Key assets include the commitment and compassion of individuals, as well as mindfulness in daily interactions. Additionally, building networks and establishing relationships with other entities contribute to fortifying the local influence through

collaborations between public and private sectors.

Impact: Specific methods of monitoring are currently being established, but there is an overall rise in participation inquiries. On a qualitative scale, there are emerging novel collaborations, fresh trajectories, and viewpoints. This is evidenced by input from participants, conveyed through direct parental input and feedback.

Conclusion: Similar organizations are recommended to stay receptive to innovative approaches, ensuring that these approaches remain as instruments rather than final objectives. It's also advisable to embrace hybrid forms of experimentation and allocate room for their exploration.

Contact:

Organisation, Town, Country: Libelà APS, Rome, Italy

Website: http://www.libela.it/

Contact person: Fabiana Colajorni, co-funder of Libelà info@libela.it

"THE APARTMENT APS" - Italy

THE APARTMENT
ASSOCIAZIONE DI PROMOZIONE SOCIALE

"Building the sustainable and inclusive future of kids leveraging on social skills' development".

Target groups:	Children 0-12 years
Focus:	The Association boosts social and emotional skills from an early age

Objectives: Established in 2019, this association in Rome was conceived as a groundbreaking co-baby space. It embraces the Scandinavian educational approach to unlock the complete personal potential of individuals right from early stages of life. The primary emphasis lies in nurturing social skills to foster inclusivity, embrace diversity, and enhance social cohesion, thereby combating instances of bullying and segregation.

Methodology: Children actively participate in workshops designed to provide them with the chance to explore the significance of social and soft skills, contributing to their holistic personal development. The Apartment APS coordinates engaging, and imaginative workshops led by professionals, serving the following primary objectives:

Catering to preschool children aged 0-5 years.

Engaging pre-adolescents (6-11 years), including those with mild disabilities and learning challenges.

The offerings from The Apartment target families seeking enjoyable activities for their children, as well as those aiming to reinforce crucial social competencies essential for well-rounded growth. These competencies encompass emotional intelligence, assertiveness, self-esteem, creativity, innovation, and the ability to interact effectively with others.

Through hands-on experiential activities, The Apartment strives to provide young

participants with valuable moments of informal learning. This approach facilitates learning through the body, senses, interactions with nature, and peer relationships. These initiatives are underpinned by the principles of the Scandinavian learning methodology.

Impact: The approach has gained broader recognition across the European landscape due to the recent engagement of the Association in a series of Erasmus+ Small Scale initiatives. These efforts are geared towards expanding its influence and infusing a cross-border dimension into its routine endeavours.

Conclusion: A critical element contributing to the triumph of this model is the provision of training and on-going skill enhancement (continuous professional development) for the personnel engaged in the initiatives, including teachers, trainers, and operators. Equally important is the active engagement of families in shaping the learning journeys, tailoring them to the unique requirements and interests of the young participants.

Contact:

Organisation, Town, Country: The Apartment APS, Rome, Italy

Website: www.theap.it

Contact person: Eleonora Perotti

"VNÍMAJKOVIA" - SLOVAKIA

Five special dolls help pre-schoolers perceive diversity

Target groups:	children aged 3-6
Focus:	Educational aids for teachers and parents to help children understand diversity. Five Vnímajkovia (sensory explorers).

Objectives: The V.I.A.C. Civic Association has a long history of creating an environment that fosters inclusion. Its main focus is on promoting inclusion in education, extending this focus to pre-school children. The organisation also has a long-standing commitment to young people, systematically promoting their skills development. This process of nurturing not only encourages personal growth, but also instils a sense of responsibility for oneself and the surrounding community. Through a variety of activities, they harness their talents, enhance their skills, and build their character as they strive to find their rightful place in society. This commitment remains in line with their core mission: "To enable the highest quality of life for all". The aim is to promote a more inclusive and welcoming atmosphere within children's groups. The aim is for children with disabilities to experience acceptance and for their peers without disabilities to be encouraged from

an early age to recognise diversity as an inherent and natural part of our existence.

Methodology: The five Vnímajkovia (Perceivers) are a set of crocheted dolls, four of which represent the handicaps most commonly found in the everyday lives of children and adults. The fifth one represents a common child who doesn't lack anything. The Perceivers are officially registered products and serve as educational aids for educators, parents and as didactic, pedagogical, and preventive aids that help children to better understand diversity. Tmejka is blind, Chcejka's family is very poor, Inka has a different skin colour than most children and Bolko has a physical handicap. The dolls are based on the personal experience of their author Ľubica Matušáková, who is part of the V.I.A.C. and inspired by real people. Moreover, a book of stories and a CD with music were prepared to accompany them. Teaching children to be perceptive is easier than removing prejudices later. "It is a way to build a more receptive generation," says their creator.

Impact: Through the "Vnímajkovia" initiative, V.I.A.C. representatives have been working with kindergartens providing a package of methods, enchanting stories, and tools to help both teachers and parents address the issue of diversity. This comprehensive approach will benefit around 200 children who are currently being educated within this framework. Future plans include extending this initiative to other kindergartens.

Contact:

Organisation, Town, Country: OZ V.I.A.C. - INŠTITÚT PRE PODPORU A ROZVOJ MLÁDEŽE, Trstená, Slovakia

Website: www.eshop.vnimajkovia.sk

Contact person: Ľubica Matuščáková, email: info@vnimajkovia.sk

"ZIPPY'S FRIENDS" - Slovakia

OZ Zippy

The Zippy's Friends programme is designed to strengthen social skills in children aged 5 -7	
Target groups:	children aged 5-7
Focus:	Zippy's Friends is an educational initiative centred on social and emotional growth, specifically tailored to enhance social aptitudes among children aged 5-7. Trainers train teachers, educators, school psychologists, special educators, and other professionals.

Objectives: The Zippy civic association works towards incorporating of social and emotional learning as a part of the national curriculum. Its main objective is to continually improve the mental wellbeing of society. Its secondary objectives of the Zippy Civic Association are to promote positive mental health, to raise public awareness of mental wellbeing and its promotion, and to prevent mental disorders. It also aims to cultivate and strengthen the life skills that form the basis of emotional intelligence. These include recognising and managing emotions, communicating effectively, building, and maintaining interpersonal relationships, conflict resolution, stress management and resilience. The association is also committed to advancing research efforts in the field of mental health. Originating over two decades ago, this program was developed by the UK-based non-governmental organization Partnership for Children (www.partnershipforchildren.org.uk). Its impact has transcended borders, spanning over 30 countries, and positively influencing the lives of over 1.6 million children across the globe. This transformative initiative has been an active presence in Slovakia since 2013.

Methodology: The Zippy's Friends programme does not focus on children with specific problems or difficulties; it promotes the emotional health of all young children.

It consists of six modules and each module consists of four lessons: these 24 lessons are delivered over the course of one school year. These are the following six modules (topics): Feelings, Communication, Relationships, Conflict Resolution, Coping with Change and Loss, Coping with New Situations.

The Zippy trainers train teachers who are interested in implementing the programme in a one-day training, and they then do it with the children for one school year. OZ Zippy provides continuous support to the trained teachers and monitors the quality by supervising selected lessons. In the middle of the school year and at the end of the school year, there are additional meetings organised with the teachers for a few hours to check the progress of the programme.

The Zippy's Friends programme is accredited by the Ministry of Education for pre-primary and primary teachers and educators. Both programmes can also be delivered by other educational professionals such as school psychologists, special educators, and others. The programme is not yet accredited for these categories of ECD staff, but the Zippy c.a. is currently in process of accreditation.

Impact: The Zippy's Friends programme has been implemented in Slovakia since 2013, it has been implemented in almost 300 schools all over Slovakia and more than 10,000 children have already completed the programme.

Contact:

Organisation, Town, Country: OZ Zippy, Bratislava, Slovakia

Website: https://www.zippy.sk/zippyho-kamarati/

Contact person/ Email: info@zippy.sk

"KOZMO'S ADVENTURES" - Slovakia
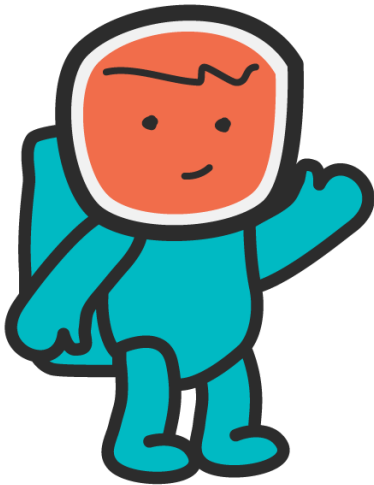
Learn how to talk to children about bullying, exclusion, and violence. The methodology respects the individuality of children. Every child is different, every child has different conditions for their development, every child is in short unique.

Target groups:	children aged 3-8, parents, ECD professionals, teachers, psychologists, special and social pedagogues.
Focus:	It is important for children to be tolerant towards each other and to be able to cope with otherness without violent and traumatizing reactions. This prevention programme is a tool to better talk to children about violence and bullying in an experiential way.

Objectives: This programme helps adults talk with children about the problematic topics of violence and bullying in an experiential way. A team of experts from Centrum Slniečko, n.o. in cooperation with the creative studio Cukru production prepared an interactive preventive programme for children. "Kozmo and his adventures" is an original Slovak preventive programme developed especially for children up to 8 years old. It can be implemented in kindergartens and primary schools. It helps you learn how to talk to children about the topics of bullying, exclusion or violence in an experiential way. The methodology is built in a way that respects the individuality of children. Every child is different, every child has different conditions for their development, and every child is in short unique.

Methodology: Kozmo and His Adventures is a distinctive and unique prevention programme from Slovakia, meticulously tailored to the country's educational landscape, encompassing both school and pre-school environments. Rooted in the intricate fabric of Slovak families and society, this programme embodies the commitment to eradicate violence and bullying through proactive measures.

The development of the PP Kozmo is the culmination of extensive practical engagement, careful research, and accumulated wisdom. It is cleverly structured to address challenging issues through practical, experiential, and playful approaches.

Complementing its methodological framework, the Preventive Programme offers a range of exclusive tools, carefully designed for the whole class. The KOZMObox contains a variety of components including a pump, light, blanket, cards, videos, songs, puzzles, and various other resources. This toolkit facilitates an immersive and engaging delivery of the programme, ensuring the active participation of children.

Designed specifically for the pre-primary education context, the Kozmo prevention programme extends its reach to kindergartens and the early years of primary school. Its main aim is to promote pro-social behaviour and the skills needed for effective teamwork and cooperation.

Impact: Online courses and webinars are available as well as a wealth of quality educational aids. The impact of the preventive programme Kozmo's Adventures in Slovakia has been remarkable. By tackling challenging issues through experiential and playful methods, it has helped to reduce violence and bullying in educational settings.

Contact:

Organisation, Town, Country: OZ Slniečko

Website: https://kozmove-dobrodruzstva.sk/preventivny-program/

Contact person/ Email: Paulina Rakusova, Educational programmes manager, educan@centrumslniecko.sk

ROZMANITA INCLUSIVE PRESCHOOL AND COMMUNITY - Slovakia

Building a model for diverse and inclusive schools and communities to end segregation an inequity in Slovakia and beyond.

Target groups:	children aged 2-5, parents, adults, and seniors from the community.
Focus:	Rozmanita is building a model inclusive preschool, school, and community in Bratislava to better prepare us all for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.

Objectives: To meet the challenges and seize the opportunities of the 21st century, we need innovative and flexible people with high levels of social and emotional intelligence, developed creative and critical thinking skills, and the ability to build strong relationships with diverse people across bubbles. These skills are best developed in diverse teams based on inclusive principles - where everyone is accepted and has a chance to develop to their full potential. In doing so, we also contribute to a fair and sustainable society.

Methodology: Rozmanita's mission is to create an inclusive development centre of exceptional quality. Their vision is to create a replicable and scalable prototype of an inclusive nursery, school and community that fosters growth regardless of background, need, ability or age.

At the heart of this initiative is an advanced education that hones 21st century skills, emphasising creativity, critical thinking, emotional and social sensitivity, English language

skills, cross-cultural interactions, and the promotion of responsible and sustainable lifestyles. Our aim is to scale this model to reach children across the country.

The journey began with the creation of a kindergarten with tiered fees based on a family's ability to pay. Each age-differentiated cohort welcomes children from different income levels, abilities, cultural backgrounds and more, fostering a rich mix of perspectives. This preschool is truly unique in providing a world-class Montessori education to this wonderfully diverse group of children.

Rozmanita's vision encompasses not only the growth of the children, but also emphasises the unity and development of their families. It strives to connect the different social spheres in Bratislava and to foster intergenerational links with the local community. It deliberately cultivates a solid, heterogeneous community. From the outset, it is committed to organising frequent community activities and educational events that provide opportunities for meaningful connections and relationships.

Impact: The kindergarten only opened in 2021 but it will eventually be followed by an elementary school, a senior centre as well as a parenting centre, so that everyone and anyone can truly develop here. We are building a model that we will test, refine, and proactively and freely spread further with other schools - to contribute to a vision in which all children have the chance to attend high quality inclusive schools where they can meet and develop together with all the people in the community to which they naturally belong.

Contact:

Organisation, Town, Country: Rozmanita Inclusive Preschool and Community, Bratislava, Slovakia

Website: www.rozmanita.sk

Contact person: Anna Symington-Maar, anna.s.maar@rozmanita.sk

SECOND STEP - Slovakia

DRUHÝ KROK

It is necessary to create a such a school environment for children that they will enjoy being at school.

Target groups:	This programme is designed mainly for children in kindergarten and first level of primary schools.
Focus:	With the help of trained teachers and psychologists, the SECOND STEP programme teaches children to get to know themselves and others, to be empathetic and compassionate, and to learn to work together in teams. Through the activities of the programme, children discover how important it is to help each other, to work well together or to create good interpersonal relationships. In this way, they are being prepared for adult life without bad memories of bullying or aggression in childhood, which can have a marked effect on their personal development.

Objectives: The SECOND STEP preventive programme provides teachers with the necessary information, knowledge, and skills to work on developing children's social-emotional and moral competences in the classroom and in working with teaching aids, but it depends largely on the personality of the teacher as to how they are able to actually work with the children, listen to them, and help them to manage their emotions and change their feelings and behaviour. The programme offers a solution to existing problems in school settings, where aggression, bullying, attacks on classmates and teachers and intolerance towards diversity are on the rise. This programme, originally called SECOND STEP, is already a common part of teaching in kindergartens and primary schools in many countries around the world, such as Finland, Germany, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Great Britain, Austria, Iceland, Latvia, Canada, the USA, Japan, and Australia.

Methodology: SECOND STEP is a proactive programme designed to support the social-emotional growth of children in kindergarten and the first five years of primary school. This comprehensive initiative, facilitated by trained educators and psychologists, guides children in cultivating empathy, putting themselves in others' shoes, fostering effective communication, mastering conflict resolution, staying out of harm's way and managing aggression and anger.

Integral to the programme's pedagogy are extensive photographs that vividly depict real-life situations encountered by children, complemented by detailed methodological guidelines to support teachers in classroom implementation. These visual aids enable educators to lead discussions on aggression, violence, hyperactivity, introversion, empathy, communication skills, moral behaviour, and harmonious classroom dynamics.

The overall goals of SECOND STEP are as follows:

1. Foster empathy in children by creating a foundation where understanding and articulating emotions are the first steps to understanding and empathising with the feelings of others.
2. Reducing aggression and aggressiveness in educational settings, countering the worrying rise in bullying and confrontation with teachers. This includes strengthening children's emotional resilience, refining social skills and promoting ethical conflict resolution.
3. Promoting tolerance of diversity, as early signs of intolerance often emerge in the formative years of primary school. By instilling values of acceptance, SECOND STEP addresses physical, psychological and social inequalities in the pre-school and early school years, thus tackling intolerance at its source.
4. Strengthening collaboration between schools and families, recognising the role of the educator in developing not only knowledge but also character. Establishing cooperative policies with students and their parents is essential both inside and outside the classroom.

5. Emphasise prevention, recognising that early intervention equips children with the tools to thwart or eliminate negative social behaviour in schools, while supporting their healthy personal development.

Impact: Currently, 260 Slovak educational institutions are already involved in the SECOND STEP project and have included it in their lessons within the subject of ethics, in their after-school activities, work with families or in the work of school psychologists and the number of cooperating schools is likely to increase in the coming years.

The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic recommends the use of the preventive programme as a teaching aid in the teaching of the subject of Ethics Education at the first level of primary schools, also outside the classroom and in the work of school psychologists.

Conclusion: This programme is proving to be effective in preventing harmful phenomena in kindergartens and primary schools. The methodology used is proven and reliable and is part of the educational system in many countries internationally. It also successfully contributes to better cooperation between teachers and parents.

Contact:

Website: www.druhykrok.sk

"HOGY VAGY" - Hungary

Self-knowledge and mental health belong to everyone.	
Target groups:	Kids, parents and ECD professionals
Focus:	Promoting mental health among kids

Objectives: Through the involvement of the whole educational community (including parents and educators), the organisation strives so that children get to know their feelings and better understand themselves. So that they better understand adults, siblings, and friends around them. So that they are successful integrating into groups and working in teams. So that they love themselves.

Methodology: The organisation promotes self-knowledge, mental health, well-being, and empathy. Hogy Vagy works with small groups of children in 30-minute sessions: with the help of stories two group leaders guide the 4-5 children in the world of self-reflection and emotions, following the metallisation-based methodology developed. Every group session starts and ends with a welcoming and farewell ritual. During the sessions the organisation provides a safe space for the children to learn about and reflect on their own inner states and emotions. A carefully chosen fairy-tale acts as the backbone of every group session. The group connects to the story by discussing personal situations and feelings similar to those appearing in the fairy-tale. A drawing follows the discussion, in order to process the experience.

Impact: Especially for disadvantaged children, the method is an important means to develop fine-motoric skills. Currently the organisation works in two 8th district kindergartens with 12 groups and reaches directly approximately 60 children per year. In 2017 and 2018, about 1000 drawings were made during the group sessions.

Conclusion: More networking between like-minded organisations is a must towards the organisation's growth! Hogy Vagy is happy to cooperate with other institutions (e.g. kindergartens, primary schools, children's homes, etc.).

Contact:

Website: https://www.hogyvagy.hu/

The Programme incorporated theory, practice and change in attitude of both preschool teachers and parents towards diversity and raised their awareness of how much young children notice differences as early as at three years of age. It boosted the confidence of both teachers and parents that they can consciously influence children's respect for diversity.

Target group	Preschool teachers and parents, children 3-6 years of age.
Focus	CPD (Continuous professional development)/ measures to improve the professional environment.

Objectives: After a decade of civil wars in the former Yugoslavia, there has been an acute need to work on reconciliation and the development of respect for diversity. The organisation Pomoc deci initiated the programme to 1. Develop a regional Western Balkan Network for peace building with young children; 2. To develop a national network for peace building with young children in Serbia, 3. To empower practitioners and parents to actively develop respect for diversity in young children in the age group 3-6 years of age.

Methodology: The Methodology included first (self) assessment of parents' and teachers' attitudes and behaviour in relation to differences, their awareness how much young children notice any differences and whether that can result in their exclusion of different children from play. Secondly it included the development of the tools and piloting them for active development of respect for diversity among children. Thirdly, it included the development of guidelines for (self) monitoring and evaluation of the activities implemented and the training on the implementation of different tools and action research process in creation and implementation of various activities.

A cascading system of training was introduced through which the initially trained teachers and parents became new peer trainers during the process.

The main strengths were that the programme reached preschools and kindergartens throughout the country through the cascading system of training and the awareness was significantly raised about children's ability to notice differences at this young age. It also triggered conscious actions by both parents and teachers to foster children's respect for differences.

The main challenge was lack of resources to provide tools for more kindergartens and preschools to implement

the activities.

The programme was realised at national level in Serbia, Croatia, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Albania.

Impact: The National Toolkit for active development of respect for diversity with young children has been recommended by the ministries of education in three participating countries as a needed resource for work in ECEC settings, the training was accredited by the national agencies in two countries and the tools have been used on regular basis all the time (persona dolls, emotions cubes etc.)

Conclusion: This programme is very much appreciated by all the actors in all the participating countries and there is need for further training, mentoring and support, so networking is needed to attract new resources.

Website:

Contact person/ Email: info@pomocdeci.org

This training provides preschool teachers and Teachers' Assistants with theoretical and practical knowledge and skills for fostering active respect for diversity in multi-ethnical, multi-religious and multi-cultural children's groups with the focus on Roma children. The training is jointly organised by Roma and Serbian experts in the field.

Target group	Preschool teachers, Teachers' Assistants
Focus	Staff training.

Objectives: Organisation Pomoc deci initiated this training together with Dr Rajko Djuric, one of the leading Roma experts in Europe. The training had an overall aim to build the capacities of both preschool teachers and Teachers' Assistants to foster active respect for diversity in multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-cultural groups of children in kindergartens with a particular focus on the specifics of working with children whose mother tongue differ from the tuition language.

Methodology: The training was a three-day theoretical and practical interactive process. The topics covered: children's perceptions, learning through play, learning about and respecting differences, history of Roma people, history of Roma culture, interaction between adults and children, specifics of different languages and translations, development of the collaborative process with parents and development of teamwork and division of roles between the teacher and teacher's assistant.

The training was organised at national level and was accredited by the Ministry of Education.

The main strengths were that it was developed and implemented jointly by the Roma and Serbian experts and was combining theoretical and practical knowledge and best practices examples. The main challenge was prejudice and stereotypes of some teachers.

Impact: Based on the evaluations of the training and constant interest from preschools and kindergartens to have such a training for their staff, the main impact was realisation of teachers of various difficulties of children coming from different ethnic, religious, and cultural background to express themselves at such young age, differences in languages that prevent a child to show either knowledge or feelings and the need to pay attention to these difficulties in the work process.

Conclusion: What are the key success factors, resources and requirements needed to replicate this service/ tool/ approach in other organisations at the national and international level?

This type of concrete training is needed on regular basis because there is lot of assumption by teachers about what children know or can express without realisation of the impact of differences on them in a majority population group.

Website:

Contact person/ Email: info@pomocdeci.org

MULTISENSORY GARDEN OF KARIN DOM FOUNDATION - Bulgaria
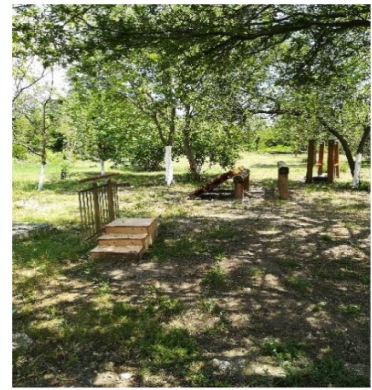
The organised open educational space is an opportunity to develop all the senses of children and to carry out integration activities; it fosters communication, and it can be created anywhere - in a small area or in a larger open space.

Target groups:	Children with various developmental disorders, children with typical development, parents, teachers / trainers working in ECEC, therapists, students.
Focus:	Innovative services, facilities and approach that establish a profound connection between children and the natural world; the multi-faceted garden serving as a conduit to facilitate "sensory integration," functioning as an inclusive, organized haven for both children with distinct learning requirements and those with conventional developmental trajectories; comprehensive professional development for educators.

Objectives: building and implementing an organised outdoor educational space aimed at "sensory integration" in the education and upbringing of children, in line with the principles and practice of classical Montessori pedagogy.

Methodology: The multisensory garden comprises 30 distinct zones, each labelled with letters from the Bulgarian alphabet, accessible to both visiting children and parents. In this open educational expanse, specialists have the freedom to conduct individual or group sessions, adapting their approach to cater to unique needs. Integration activities are a common occurrence, often uniting children with special educational requirements alongside their typically developing peers.

A glimpse into some of the areas:

Montessori Circle Zone: A flat area displays an ellipse where bags filled with diverse seeds are contained in a box. The challenge is for children, grasping a bag, to traverse the ellipse while maintaining equilibrium, promoting sensory, baric, and kinaesthetic senses.

Writing Preparation Zone: A sandbox with models and writing tools enhances hand-eye coordination, pressure control when writing in sand, and spatial awareness. For stroller-bound or vertically positioned children, a raised module with an additional sand tray aids writing exercises, stimulating sight, touch, baric, and stereognostic senses.

Magic House Zone: This dimly lit room serves as a sensory haven equipped with lights, lanterns, music, scents, and tactile boards. An accompanying adult guides sensory exploration, offering relaxation after energetic activities, accessible for stroller-bound and upright children.

Self-expression Zone: Featuring chalk and blackboards on a tripod, this area cultivates self-expression, fine-tuning hand muscles, grip, spatial orientation, and colour perception. It accommodates children with mobility constraints.

Listening Area: Guided readings encourage children to retell stories, fostering clear and coherent speech, while honing attentive skills amidst noise. Suitable for children with movement difficulties.

Tasty Geometry Zone: Raised planters resembling shapes offer a hands-on garden for growing eco-friendly produce, teaching ecological awareness, and promoting movement, observation, exploration, communication, and responsibility. It lays the foundation for healthy eating and ecological understanding while developing tactile gnosis.

Theatre Area: A designated outdoor space with a stage and seating nurtures children's artistic inclinations. Participation in retelling fairy tales and dialogues bolsters speech development.

Redefining educational spaces, the multisensory garden fosters comprehensive growth,

encouraging diverse interactions and skill acquisition while nurturing an environment of unity and understanding.

Impact: About 300 children benefit from the services annually. The results that can be observed in meeting the sensory needs of children are:

• In children, the "need" for self-stimulation and self-harm decreases; the quality of attention is improved and aspiration for participation in activities and learning is generated; independence in functional activities is achieved; spontaneous manifestations of new skills and abilities are stimulated; social interactions and communication are improved; fear and anxiety are reduced; gives resilience to the ability to cope with distractions and adapt to change; conditions are created for spontaneous expression of emotions - joy, fun.

• Parents and adults working with children help understand the child's behaviour and needs, reduce anxiety, stress, and train patience.

Conclusion: The team periodically improves its qualifications through internal and external training and shares its experience with teachers, students and professionals working in ECEC and offering social and special services.

Contact: Karin dom, Sofia, Bulgaria

Website: https://karindom.org/

Svetla Todorova, educator, email: stodorova@karindom.org

THE GOOD START – Czech Republic

"Good Start" methodology aims to develop the social and emotional competencies of pre-school children.

Target groups:	children; parents; teachers/ trainers
Focus:	staff training; methodology

Objectives:

The Good Start methodology:

- Is inclusive. It involves all children in class that includes children from different cultural backgrounds, disadvantaged social environments, and children with behavioural difficulties.
- Provides guidance for teachers and parents. It presents methods and strategies of how to support the social and emotional development of children and how to deal with problematic situations.
- Is evidence based. This methodology has been tested worldwide for over 30 years and has been shown to have a positive influence on communication between children and teachers and within the family.
- Based on the cooperation with parents. The Good Start methodology is being developed for parents and social workers.

Main topics:

- Building positive relationships between teachers and parents

- Building positive relationships with children,

- Support for positive behaviour: praising and cooperative learning

- Strategies to deal with negative behaviour.

- Methods to manage negative emotions.

- Teaching anger management

- Learning to problem solve

Methodology: The Good Start methodology is implemented on a local level (specific preschools and schools can apply to use it). The methodology uses puppets, pictures; methodological materials for parents and teachers have been published. Schola Empirica organises training and provides support to teachers who adopt this methodology.

Impact: The Good Start methodology is evidence-based. Schola Empirica introduced the Good Start methodology in Czech pre-schools in 2011. Since then, over 300 teachers have been trained and methods are being implemented in over 100 pre-schools across the Czech Republic.

Contact:

Schola Empirica, Prague, Czech Republic

Website: http://www.scholaempirica.org/

Contact person: Egle Havrdová, Director, havrdova@scholaempirica.org

The Language Friendly School welcomes and values all languages spoken by students, staff, and parents

Target groups:	The Language Friendly School (LFS) is a bottom-up, whole school approach, involving the entire school community.
Focus:	Innovative practice aiming to improve diversity and equity. The LFS is a label and a global network of international, private, and public primary and secondary schools.

Objectives: The LFS was co-founded by Ellen-Rose Kambel (director of Rutu Foundation) and Emmanuelle Le Pichon-Vorstman (associate professor, OISE, University of Toronto). The LFS is an initiative of the Rutu Foundation for Intercultural Multilingual Education, a non-profit organisation based in Amsterdam.

The LFS envisions a world in which all children have access to a language friendly-learning environment where they feel accepted and valued for who they are, and where children can speak their mother tongue.

Methodology: LFS educational institutions implement an adaptable and pragmatic language strategy that has been jointly developed by all school stakeholders. This plan is carefully tailored to the specific needs of the school, with the central aim of fostering an inclusive and language-supportive learning environment for all students. Within this framework, LFS schools make a formal commitment not to penalise or discourage students from using their mother tongue on campus. These institutions are given a two-year period to develop, refine and iterate their language plan, refining its effectiveness through practical testing and necessary adjustments. Moreover, educators enthusiastically embrace the use of students' home languages in the classroom, valuing

linguistic competence in the same way as proficiency in the school's primary language, which is often English. By becoming part of the LFS network, schools gain access to a global community of like-minded institutions, educators, and specialists. This vibrant network facilitates the exchange of ideas, videos, and the latest research breakthroughs. Regular conferences convened by LFS provide an invaluable opportunity for teachers and staff to learn together, fostering an environment of shared knowledge and insight.

Impact: More than 3,000 students are enrolled in the 12 certified LFSs. Internal evaluation is in progress and will be finalised by mid-2021. Children, teachers, other school staff and parents are part of the process.

Testimonies:

School principal: Parental involvement increased. The students seem happier and more enthusiastic. A clear plan helped teachers to develop a unified vision.

School: Children exude more confidence when they are allowed to use their own language, become more curious towards other languages and aware that other students also speak different languages at home. Students are also more confident when their first language(s) is acknowledged.

Conclusion: The main benefit for schools to become LFS is working on a concrete plan for including all the languages, cultural backgrounds, and identities of their students as well as their parents/caregivers. As there is no blueprint of what schools must do, schools develop their own plan according to their own needs. This means that even small steps (such as inviting parents to write a wish for their children in their home languages, or making a welcome door) immediately create a sense of belonging and unity. And a tip for success from one of LFSs: "Start with small steps and it will start to grow on its own! Eventually everyone is aware of how they can empower all children."

Contact: Website: https://languagefriendlyschool.org/

Contact person: Dr. Ellen-Rose Kambel, Director of Rutu Foundation;

info@languagefriendlyschool.org

Appreciating the uniqueness of each child and family beyond social and cultural backgrounds

Target groups:	children; parents; teachers/ trainers; ECEC leaders
Focus:	staff training, special provisions for improving diversity equality in ECEC - campaigns, innovative services/ tools launched, course design, measures to improve service delivery

Objectives: Public Kindergarten Ringeraja in the municipality Dobropolje, Slovenia, operates under the Public educational institution Osnovna Šola Dobropolje and enrols children from 11 months up to 6 years old. According to the available data, 94% of all 3-6 years and 70% of all 1-3 years old children within the municipality Dobrepolje are enrolled/included in kindergarten.

Kindergarten embodies diversity through children, parents, and professionals from varied social and cultural backgrounds. This inclusivity extends beyond conventional boundaries, recognizing and celebrating the distinctiveness of each family. The partnership is cultivated based on the values and beliefs they contribute.

The kindergarten excels in embracing multifaceted diversity, including families of different compositions, refugee and migrant children, Roma children, those with special needs, and others. This aligns with their vision of fostering well-being, nature integration, creativity, empathy, and early learning in an engaging environment.

Methodology: Kindergarten Ringeraja adheres to the national curriculum as their foundational framework. The curriculum's adaptability permits integration of alternative

pedagogies, and this flexibility led to the adoption of the Step by Step methodology by Kindergarten Ringeraja in 2009. Over time, the methodology has become the cornerstone of their approach. In tune with children's requirements, the staff constantly assesses their strengths and areas for growth. This commitment to development extends to their professional journey, bolstered by ongoing training across various aspects of their roles.

Recent years have witnessed a specific emphasis on inclusivity, democratic values, and embracing diversity through professional development initiatives. The kindergarten's unwavering dedication to excellence is reflected in their comprehensive approach: continual development, monitoring, and the formation of professional learning communities, coaching, and supervision. They firmly believe that the key to delivering exceptional programs lies in the continuous growth, introspection, evaluation, and active participation of all stakeholders involved.

A remarkable illustration of this philosophy is evident in their recent initiative to design a long-term strategy and vision, involving parents, teachers, the local community, and early childhood development experts. This collaborative process underlines their conviction that effective child upbringing, development, and learning necessitate the collective engagement of various influential figures.

Impact: Evaluation of daily practice, programmes, approaches, techniques, and tools represents a basis for planning in the Kindergarten Ringaraja. Throughout the ongoing professional development, professionals in the kindergarten have mastered their skills in assessing their practice and becoming critical professional peers to their colleagues. Through observations, monitoring, and peer-to-peer professional support and learning, the kindergarten evaluates and reflects on their programmes and approaches in order to improve the practice and reach the high-quality standards of an early childhood setting, which follows the principles of democratic values, diversity, and inclusion. In the process of reflection, evaluation, and planning, besides professionals and experts, parents, families, and the local community are also involved.

Conclusion: The benefits of a diversity positive service are that the team around the child grows professionally and personally, which contributes that each child, each family can

express their needs, contribute, be involved, and participate. Just like the principal has answered the question on how the diversity positive kindergarten should look like: *"…just like ours! Open, positive, warm, respectful, and innovative*

Contact:

Kindergarten Ringaraja, Osnovna šola Dobrepolje

Website: www.osdobrepolje.si/ringaraja/

Contact person: Ms. Cvetka Košir, Principal of the Kindergarten

RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOLS – THE UK

The Rights Respecting Schools Award (UNICEF UK) works with ECEC providers to create safe and inspiring places to learn, where children are respected, their talents are nurtured, and they can thrive.

Target groups:	Children, teachers, ECEC leaders
Focus:	Special provisions for improving diversity equality in ECEC – campaigns, innovative services/ tools launched, course design, measures to improve service delivery.

Objectives: Launched in 2006, the programme rewards education providers, including those in ECEC, who recognise children's rights and promote awareness of these rights among those they teach and care for. ECEC providers should work to embed these rights in their daily practice to give children the best chance to lead happy, healthy lives and become responsible, active citizens.

Methodology: Inspired by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), the Rights Respecting Schools Award recognises educational institutions that put these rights into practice. In tailoring this approach to the field of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC), Frances Bestley, the Programme Director, underlines the essence of the endeavour, noting that while ECEC's focus is more child-centred than curriculum-centred, the parallels remain striking.

Within ECEC, the emphasis shifts to promoting adults' understanding of the Convention and enabling children to express these concepts in age-appropriate ways. For example,

children might articulate their rights to safety, learning, play, a name and more. Evaluators assess ECEC practitioners' interactions with young children and review their curriculum planning. Providers are awarded a bronze, silver or gold award based on their integration of the UNCRC principles. Educators progressively refine their practice, and the award is valid for three years, after which they must be re-accredited.

Impact: As of 2021, over 1.6 million children in the UK go to a Rights Respecting School and nearly 5,000 schools across the UK are working through the Award from Bronze to Gold accreditation. As the Programme Director points out, "there is a lot of evidence that awareness of difference starts off quite early [in children], so you do need to focus on it in ECEC". Therefore, the Award enables ECEC leaders to ensure that they are creating an environment in which everyone's rights are respected, regardless of any initial perceived differences.

Conclusion: Children are happier, healthier, feel safer, have better relationships, and are more active when their rights are respected. ECEC providers tend to have a child-centred approach to learning. The UNCRC is focused on putting children first and seeing things from a child's perspective. ECEC providers are, therefore, in a good position to influence the children attending their centres and encourage them to recognise and respect each other's rights. However, some rights are very complicated and may seem difficult to convey to younger children. However, ECEC providers are advised to focus on topics that will make most sense for children at that age of development. Different issues can be tackled at different times. As stated by a teacher featured on the Award's website, "rights are the context for all our work – they provide a framework for the whole jigsaw".

Contact:

Rights Respecting Schools (UNICEF UK), London, United Kingdom

https://www.unicef.org.uk/rights-respecting-schools/the-rrsa/

Frances Bestley – Programme Director, francesb@unicef.org.uk

Schools Out UK, working alongside the Proud Trust, has produced a series of lesson plans which introduce LGBTQ themes in an age-appropriate way for children attending ECEC provision.

Target groups:	children; parents; teachers/ trainers; ECEC leaders
Focus:	staff training, special provisions for improving diversity equality in ECEC - campaigns, innovative services/ tools launched, course design, measures to improve service delivery

Objectives: Since 1974, Schools Out UK has been dedicated to promoting equality, safety, and visibility for the diverse spectrum of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people. There is currently no other organisation in the UK with such a broad and fundamental aim for this vibrant and diverse community.

Methodology: Classroom resources have been produced which enable ECEC providers to easily integrate diversity-related topics into their daily provision. One lesson plan ostensibly focuses on colours but importantly, acts as a foundation for breaking gender stereotypes, e.g. blue for boys and pink for girls. Another lesson plan introduces young children to different kinds of families and family structures. This resource similarly aims to

address stereotypes and misconceptions, but also tackles discrimination and fosters acceptance and understanding towards a variety of families regardless of culture or belief, sexual orientation/same sex parents, race, fostering/adoption, etc.

Impact: Schools OUT UK is actively involved in research, debate, and curriculum improvement on LGBTQ issues. It works with the Department for Education, OFSTED, the Equality and Human Rights Commission, local authorities, academies, teaching unions and other relevant education stakeholders. As a result, the educational resources presented here have considerable influence and the capacity to revolutionise Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) provision across the country.

Conclusion: The lesson plans provided challenge ECEC providers to reassess their current approaches to integrating equality and diversity into their routines. Sue Sanders, Chair of Schools Out UK, and creator of LGBTQ History Month introduced the term 'usualising' to challenge the problematic nature of the conventional idea of 'normal' and its associations with attributes such as whiteness, heterosexuality, and ability. The lesson plans featured on the classroom resources website are about usualising, that is, seamlessly embedding LGBTQ themes within something else you're looking at".

Contact:

Schools Out UK, London, United Kingdom

http://www.schools-out.org.uk/

Sue Sanders – Chair, chairs@schools-out.org.uk

EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE - THEORETICAL INTRO

SELECTION FROM RELEVANT LITERARY SOURCES

Social justice

The term "social justice" was first used in 1840 by a Sicilian priest, Luigi Taparelli d'Azeglio, and given exposure by Antonio Rosmini-Serbati (1848) in La Costitutione Civile Secondo la Giustizia Sociale (Novak 2000). Subsequently, John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) gave this anthropomorphic approach to social justice almost omnipotent status in his book Utilitarianism, Liberty and Representative Government (1960: 57-58):

... we should treat all equally well ... who have deserved equally well of us, and that society should treat all equally well who have deserved equally well of it, that is, who have deserved equally well absolutely. This is the highest abstract standard of social and distributive justice, towards which all institutions, and the efforts of all virtuous citizens, should be made in the utmost degree to converge (**see Zajda, Majhovich, and Rust, 2006**).

According to **Hytten and Bettez (2011)** educational philosophers have drawn upon several classical philosophical discussions of justice and applied them to contemporary educational situations. For example, they have considered how Kant's categorical imperative, Mill's utilitarianism, or Rawls' original position may help us to come up with criteria for making assessments or judgments about whether educational policies and practices are fair. In this vein, Rizvi (1998) identifies three broad philosophical traditions for thinking about social justice: liberal individualism, market individualism and social democratic. The liberal individualist view, drawn heavily from Rawls, elevates fairness as the central feature of justice. Two principles of Rawls (1972) come into play in the liberal individualist perspective. First, each person is entitled to as much freedom as possible if others share the same freedom. Second, social goods should be distributed as equally as possible, with inequities being allocated in a way that benefits the least privileged members of society. Almost diametrically opposed to Rawls, the market individualist view of justice emphasizes that people are entitled in relationship to their efforts. Rizvi cites Nozick's (1976) work to support this perspective on social justice which advocates that justice is measured by fair starting conditions. Rizvi (1998) writes that in this perspective,

it is "the justice of the competition—that is, the way competition was carried out and not its outcome—that counts". The social democratic perspective, largely drawn from Marx, considers justice in relationship to the needs of various individuals, emphasizing a more collectivist or cooperative vision of society.

The idea of social justice does not have a single essential meaning—it is embedded within discourses that are historically constituted and that are sites of conflicting and divergent political endeavours. This difficulty can also be seen as educators struggle with social justice when they attempt to put a commitment to this idea into practice (Rizvi, 1998).

Education for Social Justice

There are multiple discourses that educators draw upon when claiming a social justice orientation. These include democratic education, critical pedagogy, multiculturalism, poststructuralism, feminism, queer theory, anti-oppressive education, cultural studies, postcolonialism, globalization, and critical race theory. While often these are overlapping and interconnected discourses, this is not always the case, and the strength that might come from dialogue across seemingly shared visions can be compromised. Thus it seems useful to tease out more clearly what we mean when we claim a social justice orientation, especially so that we can find places where the beliefs, theories and tools we do share can be brought to bear on a more powerful, and, ultimately, more influential vision of educating for social justice—one that can better challenge the problematic growth of conservative, neoliberal, and many would argue, unjust, movements in education (**Hytten, Bettez**, 2011).

The definition of social justice education includes both an interdisciplinary conceptual framework for analysing multiple forms of oppression and their intersections, as well as a set of interactive, experiential pedagogical principles and methods/practices. We use the term "oppression" rather than discrimination, bias, prejudice, or bigotry to emphasize the pervasive nature of social inequality that is woven throughout social institutions as well as embedded within individual consciousness. The conceptual framework and pedagogical approach of social justice education provide tools for examining how oppression operates

both in the social system and in the personal lives of individuals from diverse communities.

The goal of social justice education is to enable individuals to develop the critical analytical tools necessary to understand the structural features of oppression and their own socialization within oppressive systems. Social justice education aims to help participants develop awareness, knowledge, and processes to examine issues of justice/injustice in their personal lives, communities, institutions, and the broader society. It also aims to connect analysis to action; to help participants develop a sense of agency and commitment, as well as skills and tools, for working with others to interrupt and change oppressive patterns and behaviours in themselves and in the institutions and communities of which they are a part (**Adams, Maurianne et al**, 2016).

The pedagogical principles of social justice education follow (Adams, Maurianne et al, 2016):

Principle 1: Create and maintain a welcoming and inclusive social justice learning environment based on clear norms and guidelines agreed to by the entire learning community.

Principle 2: Help participants acknowledge their own multiple positions within systems of inequality in order to understand how oppression operates on multiple levels.

Principle 3: Anticipate, acknowledge, and balance the emotional with the cognitive components of SJE learning.

Principle 4: Draw upon the knowledge and experiences of participants and the intergroup dynamics in the room to illustrate and discuss social justice content.

Principle 5: Encourage active engagement with the issues and collaboration among participants.

Principle 6: Foster and evaluate personal awareness, acquisition of knowledge and skills, and action-planning processes to create change.

Principle 1: The "first thing in the door" for participants will shape their initial impressions of each other and their comfort level with SJE. So how to get started is important and can

involve such entrance activities as icebreakers, introductions, and establishing the norms and guidelines for a learning community.

Principle 2: A key component of social justice education pedagogy is having participants explore their social identities and socialization experiences. Their identities and experiences as members of particular social groups are lenses through which they make meaning of their lives and the world. Participants may have deeply considered some aspects of their identity but not others. It is important that participants explore how their social identities and cultural backgrounds inform their worldviews and lived realities. Sharing their own stories and hearing those of others are powerful ways to help participants reflect on their own experiences and note commonalities and differences with others who have similar and different social identities.

Principle 3: Social justice learning is emotionally and cognitively challenging because it asks participants to not only explore new ideas and content that may clash with their assumptions about the world, but it also asks them to examine their own socialization and participation in perpetuating injustice. These are not "neutral" topics. Facilitators need to expect and plan for the range of intellectual and affective responses that commonly arise.

Principle 4: The content in social justice education does not only come from "out there" through readings, media, and guest speakers, but also arise within the group itself. Activities are created and intentionally structured so that participants not only reflect on their own experiences, but also hear about and learn from the experiences of others. Participants can broaden their frames of reference and increase their knowledge from hearing the thoughts, opinions, and lived realities of others in the group.

Principle 5: The pedagogy of social justice education is a pedagogy of activity, embedded in multiple social contexts (the content, the learning community, the self in relation to others). There is an immense active-learning pedagogical literature on how to form groups, structure tasks, facilitate collaboration, use small or large-group discussion techniques, and structure dialogue or debate, role playing or simulations, cooperative or collaborative projects, and scaffold learning tasks.

Principle 6: Learning objectives and evaluation need to be aligned in any educational process, however informal or formal the workshop or classroom setting. Whether

evaluation is expressed through encouragement or through grades, or some combination of the two, it conveys a clear message about what is valued and recognized. If we are to "walk the talk" about learning goals, we need also to recognize progress in participant awareness, readiness, and skills to create change (Adams, Maurianne et al, 2016).

Anchored by other principles created by **Özlem Sensoy and Robin DiAngelo** (2014):

- all people are individuals, but we are also members of socially constructed groups.

- society is stratified, and social groups are valued unequally;

- social groups that are valued more highly have greater access to resources and this access is structured into the institutions and cultural norms;

- social injustice is real and exists today;

- relations of unequal power are constantly being enacted at both the micro (individual) and macro (structural) levels;

- we are all socialized to be complicit in these relations;

- those who claim to be for social justice must strategically act from that claim in ways that challenge social injustice;

- this action requires a commitment to an ongoing and lifelong process,

Social justice educators guide children/students in commitments along at least three fronts.

First, social justice educators guide students in critical analysis of the presentation of mainstream knowledge as neutral, universal, and objective.

Second, social justice educators guide students in critical self-reflection of their own socialization into structured relations of oppression and privilege. They may do this through popular social justice exercises such as My Culture Chest, Act Like a Man/ Act Like a Woman, and Step Forward/Step Back.

Third, social justice educators guide students in developing the skills with which to see, analyse, and challenge relations of oppression and privilege. For example, many educators encourage their students to participate in cultural events, work with case studies, and

brainstorm strategies for working with youth on social justice action projects in their schools and communities.

One of the key strategies of domination in mainstream society is the normalizing of particular knowledge as universal and applicable to all. Yet critical social justice pedagogues understand that knowledge is rooted in and shaped by specific positions and interests; in other words, knowledge is *socially constructed*. Further, these positions are constituted through relations of power. Making those specific interests visible is a primary goal of the social justice classroom. To this end, educators work to reveal the values and interests embedded in dominant knowledge claims and to bringing alternative knowledge claims to the fore. Meaning is constructed through the stories we tell and are told; we ascribe value by naming and, just as profoundly, by not naming. In light of this, many social justice educators invite speakers from minority groups to share experiences that are typically marginalized in the mainstream classroom.

Understanding the concept of positionality is a specific dimension of understanding knowledge as socially constructed. In social justice practice, the concept of positionality is an assertion that all knowledge is partial knowledge and arises from a web of cultural values, beliefs, experiences, and social positions. Thus, who a person is (as knower) is intimately connected to that person's socialization into a matrix of group locations (including race, class, gender, and sexuality). As such, practicing seeing knowledge through the concept of positionality is a key pedagogical goal in the social justice classroom.

In the social justice classroom, many educators try to not only establish a democratic space, but also a "safe" space. According to Adams, Bell, and Griffin's (1997) well-known sourcebook for teaching social justice education, "Establishing a safe environment in which students can discuss ideas, share feelings and experiences, and challenge themselves and each other to re-evaluate opinions and beliefs is one of the primary facilitation responsibilities" (p. 283).

Marchesani and Adams (1992) identify four dimensions to consider for addressing diversity and equity in a classroom: 1) educator/instructor, 2) students, 3) curriculum, and 4) pedagogy. Briefly, the four dimensions address these questions: "Who are we as educators/instructors?" "Who are our students?" "What do we teach?" and "How do we teach it?" To these four dimensions, we add one more: 5) classroom climate and group

dynamics, which affects and is affected by all four other dimensions: "How do the climate and interactions in the classroom affect learning?" (**Bell, Goodman, and Ouellett**, 2016).

According to Heather W. Hackman (2005) social justice approach can be characterized by five essential components:

- Content mastery.

- Tools for critical analysis.

- Tools for social change.

- Tools for personal reflection.

- An awareness of multicultural group dynamics.
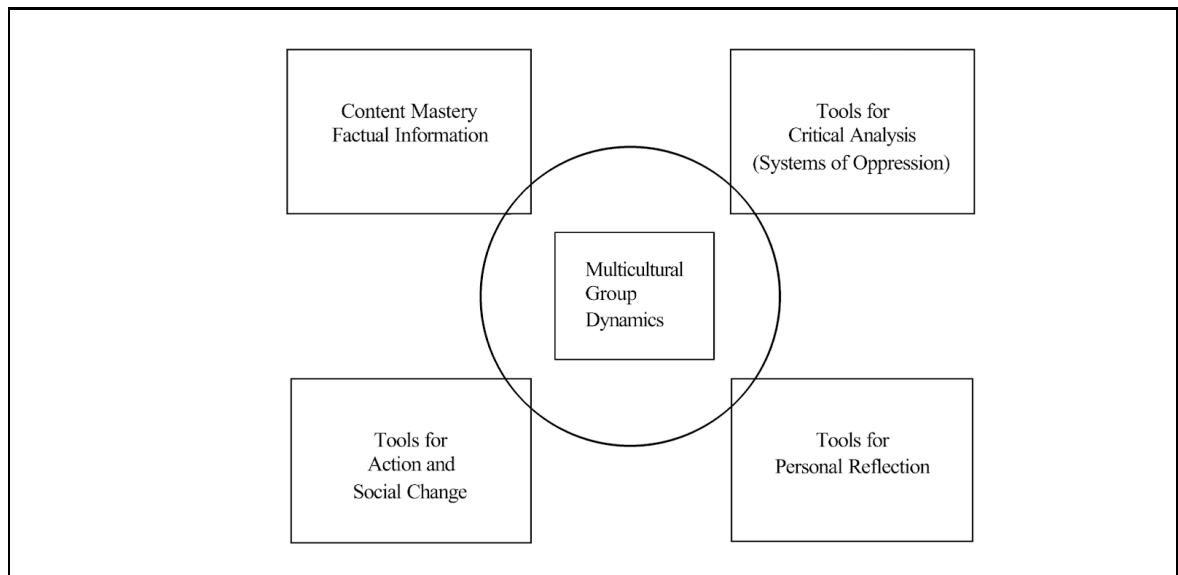
Content mastery is a vital aspect of social justice education and consists of three principal spheres: factual information, historical contextualization, and a macro- to-micro content analysis. Content mastery is the first component of effective social justice education because information acquisition is an essential basis for learning. Without complex sources of information, students cannot possibly participate in positive, proactive social change. Content mastery involves student understanding on both the micro and the macro levels. First, as countless authors in both multicultural and social justice education indicate, students need information that is connected to their lives and that helps them to understand the micro-level implications of macro issues.

The term critical thinking has become so overused in education that it has lost some of its meaning. Thinking about an issue is not equivalent to *critical* thinking, which requires: (1) focusing on information from multiple, non-dominant perspectives, and seeing those as independently valid and not as an add-on to the dominant, hegemonic one; (2) decentring students' analytical frame and opening their minds to a broader range of experiences; (3) analysing the effects of power and oppression; and (4) inquiring into what alternatives exist with respect to the current, dominant view of reality of this issue. The first two points are particularly important in that if I critically analyse other cultural perspectives while never leaving the safety and comfort of my own, I do nothing more than reify "the other" or "exotic other" status of those groups and perpetuate the dehumanization of those groups. Therefore, critical thinking is the process by which we consider perspective, positionality, power, and possibilities with respect to content.

Tools for action and social change, is critical to help move students from cynicism and despair to hope and possibility. Upon learning about issues of oppression and privilege, dominant group members may feel mired in the reality of their privilege, and subordinate group members may re-experience the frustration of oppression. Teaching about issues of oppression without proffering social action tools for students ultimately creates a classroom atmosphere that lacks hope and creative energy.

Personal reflection reminds teachers to reflect critically on themselves and the personal qualities that inform their practice. Ongoing self-reflection also reminds educators that there is always more to consider and helps to keep their minds open to other possibilities. Teachers can reflect on such questions as: Where did I get this information? Why do I think this? Do I know this for sure or is it merely an old idea mistaken for fact?

The fifth element for effective teaching for social justice involves understanding group dynamics of the classroom and the socially constructed identities of the teacher and students. An awareness of these dynamics determines how social justice educators will approach the previous four dynamics, and thus impacts the efficacy of their implementation. Creating a student-centred learning environment is lauded as an essential element of good teaching by some of the best thinkers in the fields of multicultural education and social justice education (Ayers, 1998; Gay, 2000; Nieto, 2000; Shor, 1992), and yet if an educator does not consider the group dynamics as they pertain

to social identities and multicultural perspectives, they miss the true potential of student-centred teaching and social justice education.

Literature

ADAMS, MAURIANNE ET AL. (2016). *TEACHING FOR DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE*. LONDON, UK: ROUTLEDGE.

Goodman, J., Ouellett, L. M. (1997). Design and Facilitation. In Adams, M., Bell, L. A., & Griffin, P. (Eds.): *Teaching for diversity and social justice: A sourcebook*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Heather W. Hackman, W. H. (2005). Five Essential Components for Social Justice Education. In Equity *& Excellence in Education*, 38: 103–109.

Hytten, K., Bettez, S. C. (2011). Understanding Education for Social Justice. *Educational Foundations*, v25 n1-2 p7-24 Win-Spr 2011.

Kemmis, S., Weeks, P. (Eds.). (2002) *Action research in practice: Partnerships for social justice in education*. London, UK: Routledge.

Marchesani, L., & Adams, M. (1992). Dynamics of diversity in the teaching-learning process: A faculty development model for analysis and action. In M. Adams (Ed.): *Promoting diversity in college classrooms: Innovative responses for the curriculum, faculty, and institutions* (pp. 9-19). New Directions for Teaching and Learning, No. 52. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Novak, M. (2000). Defining Social Justice. *First Things 108* (December): 11-13. http://www.firstthings.com/ftissues/ft0012/opinion/novak/html .

Nozick, R. (1976). *Anarchy, state and utopia*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

Rawls, J. (1972). *A theory of justice*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press.

Rizvi, F. (1998). Some thoughts on contemporary theories of social justice. In B. Atweh, S.

Sensoy, Ö., DiAngelo, R. (2014)*.* Respect Differences? Challenging the Common Guidelines in Social Justice Education. *Democracy and Education*, Vol. 22, No 2.

Zajda, J., Majhovich, S. & Rust, V. (2006). Introduction: Education and Social Justice. *eview of Education,* 52:9 22 9 Springer.

EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE METHODOLOGY – TRAINING MANUAL

Active listening (Story of my name)

Objectives

Participants will learn how to practice active listening. Participants will get to know each other better.

Description

Active listening is a technique that helps participants to really listen to one another. In an everyday communication sequence people often interrupt each other, assuming this is helping the communication flow. Often the interruption is based on the fact we are more concerned about what we have in our own minds, and not about what the other person wants to say. With this skill, one can learn how to listen actively.

1.   Split participants into pairs. Explain the rule: the listener cannot speak but must demonstrate active interest in what the other person is saying by using body language.

2.   For 2 minutes one of the participants will speak and the other participant will be the listener. Then they switch, and for another 2 minutes the one who was speaking, becomes the listener, and the listener becomes the speaker.

3.   Tell them silence is fine. When you are the speaker and need time to think, there will be silence. The listener will be quiet, wait, and not show any impatience.

Topics:

·   *Story of your name*

·   *Your best moment from last summer*

·   *Your biggest challenge in your work this year*

After pair work is finished, spend some time de-briefing the process. Ask people: how they felt; what if anything was difficult for them; and how they could use this process in a

cross-cultural communication setting. Talk about what interruptions mean, when they help, and when they block the speaker.

Tips for the trainer:

Have a loud and distinctive signal for when the roles are to change. Online: Use breakout rooms and signal the 2 minutes with a message or sound. Offline: Make sure that the pairs are separated from one another. Have people move their chairs away from tables and face one another.

Positive gossip

This is a very powerful activity, and at the beginning of a session gives participants plenty of confidence and energy to work in teams.

Objectives

To provide positive feedback for participants, without necessarily knowing the other.

Description

1. Tell participants they will work in triads (group of 3). Divide them randomly.

2. Offline: the triads sit on chairs, in a triangle form, facing outside the circle. Online: triads go into breakout rooms.

3. Explain the rules to the participants: There will be 3 rounds. In each round, 2 participants will say POSITIVE things for 2 minutes about the third participant, who listens and embraces the positive opinions/ feedbacks/ hypothesis.

4. It is very important that you keep the time, and signal when it is time to switch from one person to the next.

Tips for the trainer

It works perfectly well with people who never met before. However, it is important that it should happen after a few activities, so the participants have an idea about the other participants.

Identity onion

When to use it? When starting to talk about cultural identity, and intercultural conflicts. Goal/Learning aims: If one understands the causes of the cultural differences, it will be easier to accept things that might look strange at first sight or that are hard to understand.

Full description of the activity:

1.   Trainer gives 4 coloured A5 papers to all participants (yellow, green, blue, red).

2.   Tell the participants:

a.   "You will have to place the papers under each other in the following order. On the top the yellow one, under it the green one, under it the blue one and under it the red one."

b.   "I will ask you questions, and you have to write the answers on the designated coloured paper. I will tell you which question belongs to which paper. It is important to write the first thing that comes to your mind, don't think about it too much. You can ask questions if something is not clear, but do not discuss your answers with others. Work on your own."

c.   "It is important to know that later on there will be one other person who will read your answers, so bear that in mind when writing your answers. At the end of the session you will get your answers back. Don't write your name on the papers."

3.   Read the questions to the group in the following order:

<u>1 - yellow paper</u>

What kind of clothes do you prefer?

What music do you prefer?

What kind of meals do you prefer?

Name one of your characteristics that others might recognize on you.

2 - green paper

What do you notice instantly in others?

What do you like in others the most?

What do you like to talk about with your friends?

What do you do when you meet friends?

3 - blue paper

List three good habits of yours.

List three bad habits of yours.

What would your dream job be?

Where do you picture yourself in five years?

4 - red paper

What do you believe in?

What are your 3 core values?

What is something that you would never do?

4.   Tell the participants (and illustrate with 4 coloured papers)

„ If you are ready, please take the red paper. Crumple it into a ball. If you are ready with the red ball, take the blue paper, put the red one in, and crumple it again into a bigger ball. If you are ready with the blue ball, take the green paper, put the blue in it and crumple again. Finally take the yellow paper and repeat the crumpling. You will have a big yellow ball at the end."

5.   Now take all the balls from the participants and put them into a bag or box. Tell the participants.

"Please take one ball each. First check whether it is yours or not. Do not read it, just check quickly. If it is yours, please put it back and take another one. Your task

will be to find the owner of the ball. Please avoid guessing. First read the answers on the yellow paper. If you have no clue, you can read the green paper and so on. If you are sure or almost sure about the owner, please approach the person you think wrote the answers. If you were right and found the right person, you might want to ask him/her if you could read all papers. If you are done, please give the ball back to its owner."

6.   Wait until every ball is given back to the owner, and they sit down. If somebody is hard to find, emphasize that this game is not about winning.

Debriefing: How did it feel to follow the instructions? Which questions were easy/ difficult to answer? Why? What helped you find the owner of the ball? What do you think this ball thing is anyway? Does it resemble something? What does it look like? It looks like an onion. It represents our personality with the layers. What do you think these layers represent?

There are different layers of our self, our personality. There are visible and non-visible traits. If you recall the answers you read, were there things about which your opinion is very different or very similar?

Do you think this exercise helps you understand something about yourself or the others?

Cultural onion:

Try to imagine culture as this onion of personality. Cultures also have visible and non-visible traits/aspects. Visible, like clothing, objects, buildings - these make up the outer layer of the onion. And non-visible things, values that we only understand when getting to know the other person better. It is important to underline that inner and outer layers interact: thoughts, beliefs, myths determine the food we eat, the clothes we wear the buildings we live in.

There are some situations where you might feel uncomfortable when experiencing or facing a habit, behaviour, and feature. It is hard to understand or accept or tolerate these

differences. We often experience or decode these situations as conflicts, though these are simply different from what we are used to.

Manifestations of culture: different levels

Symbols

Heroes

Rituals

Values

Practices
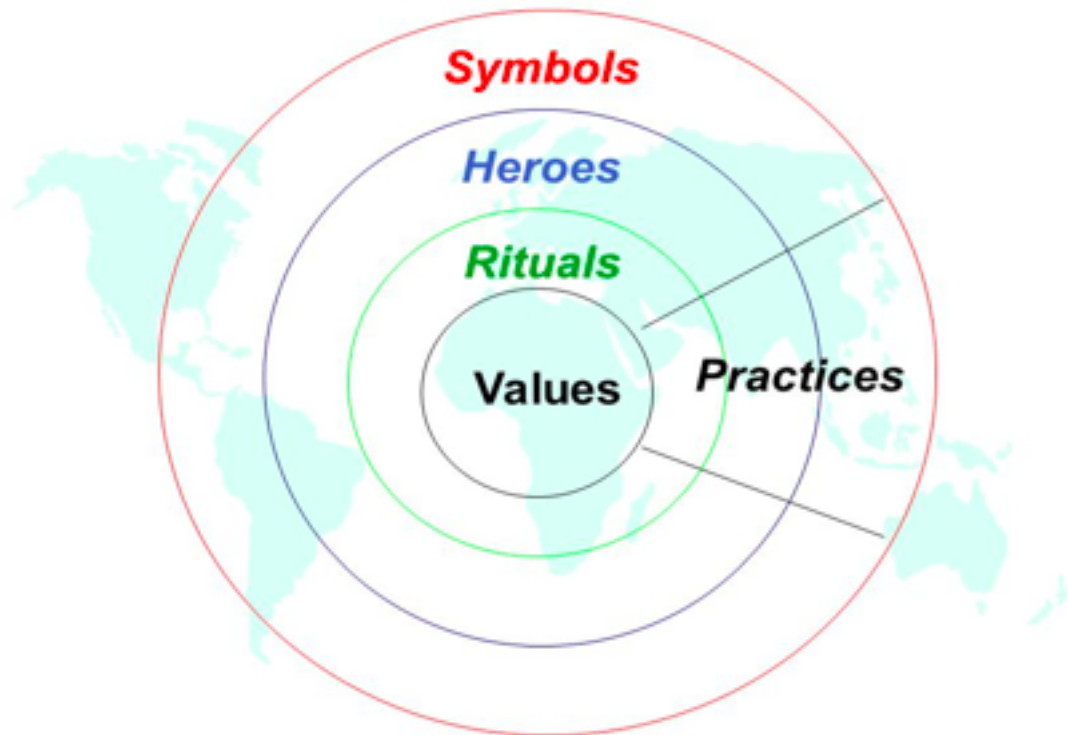
Source: G. Hofstede

Jelly Baby

Objectives

This graphic design gives you an opportunity to map participants feelings / thoughts on certain topics.

Description

1.   Show participants the Jelly Baby tree. See in Attachment.

2.   Ask participants to colour the figure that represents the best how do they feel about a certain topic.

3.   Let them explain their choices.

Other examples:

Tips for the trainer:

When leading this activity online, use a picture that has numbers attached to each figure. Then ask participants to write the numbers in the chat box.

Source:

Pip Wilson and Ian Long 2018, The Big Book of Blob Trees, by Routledge.

BLOB TREE
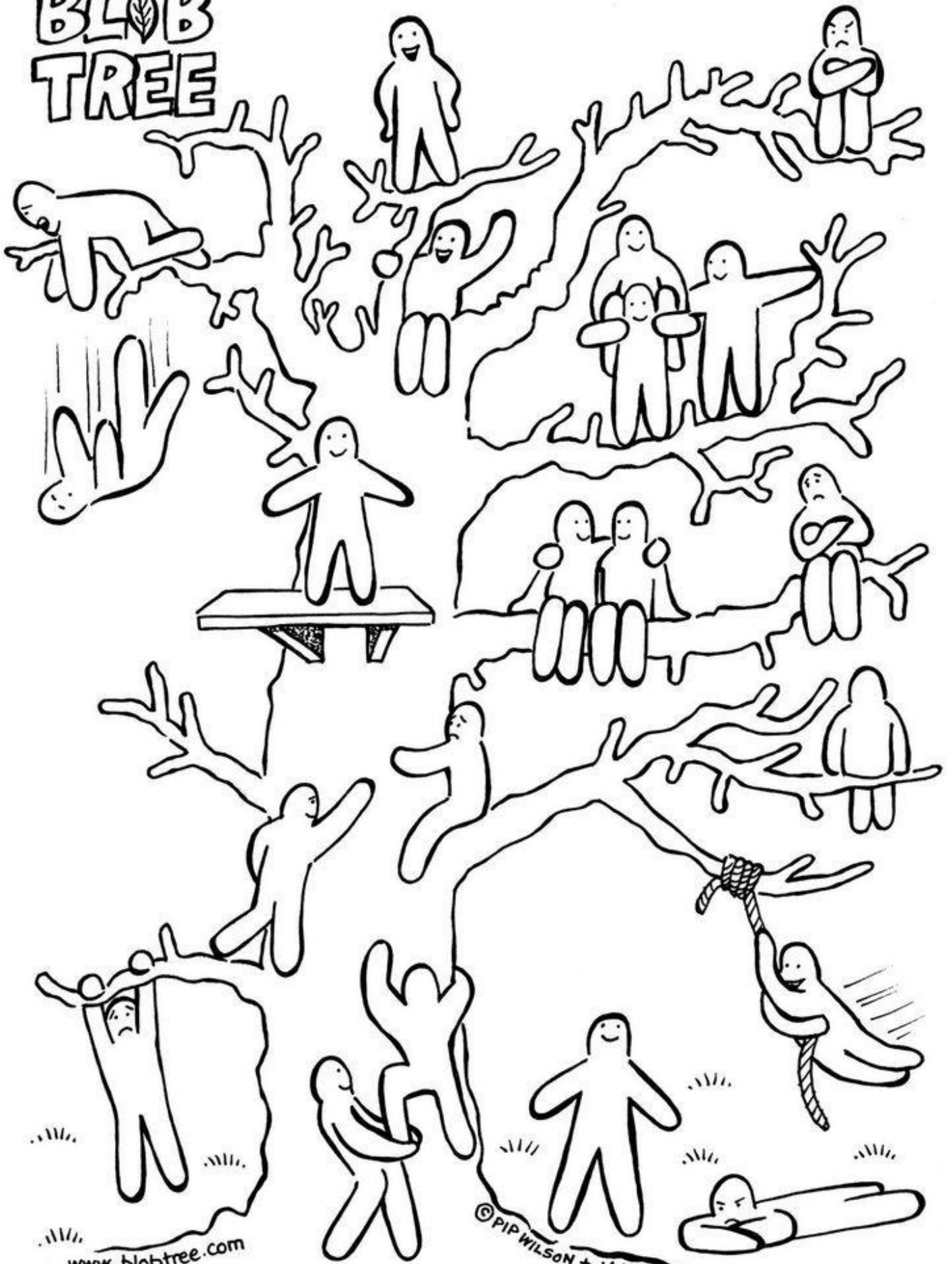
© PIP WILSON + IAN LONG 2005

www.blobtree.com

Leila and Mohamed

Duration: 60 minutes

When to use it? When starting to talk about prejudices and stereotyping.

Goal/Learning aims: Participants will understand how boundaries and information frame our thoughts, potentially leading to prejudice and stereotyping.

Materials needed: handout, flipchart, marker.

Full description of the activity:

This activity helps participants to understand their own stereotypes and the possibilities of miscommunication in intercultural communication settings. The activity requires group work.

Trainer instructions:

1. Tell participants that you are going to read a story to them twice. It is worth illustrating the story by drawing a river on the chart paper, with the crocodiles and faces of the characters.

The Nile is a long-long river, which runs to the North. There are many crocodiles in it and there are only a few bridges over it. LEILA is living at the bank of the river. LEILA is a 17-year-old girl, who is desperately in love with MOHAMED, who is living on the opposite side of the Nile. LEILA is determined to visit her love, and therefore goes to AHMED and asks him to take her to the opposite side of the river. Although AHMED has the time and he has the boat, he still does not take LEILA over the river. LEILA does not give up, goes to TARIK, and asks him to take her to the opposite side of the river. TARIK says ok, but he will do so only the next morning, and demands that LEILA should spend the night with him. And so it

has happened. LEILA wanted to visit MOHAMED by all means, so she spent the night with TARIK and in the morning, TARIK took her to the opposite side of the river. LEILA went flying into the arms of her love to whom she told what kind difficulties she had had to go through in order to get to him. MOHAMED sent LEILA away. LEILA was walking unhappily along the bank of the Nile, fighting her tears until she happened to come across DZSAFAR. DZSAFAR asked her what her sorrow was about, and LEILA told him her story. DZSAFAR went to MOHAMED and slapped him twice heavily in his face without saying a single word.

2. Tell participants they are each going to do their own personal ranking of the given characters.

3. Tell the participants: You have five scores (1 to 5) and five characters. Give your favourite character the highest score, which is five. Give your least favourite character the score of 1. Rank each character.

4. Break into small groups. Each group comes to agreement on common scores/rankings based on what they heard. Give participants about 10 minutes to complete this task.

5. Draw a chart on the flipchart. Ask each group to say their scores and ask them why they rated the characters as they did.

	Leila	Mohamed	Ahmed	Tarik	Dzafar
Group 1 *(example)*	5	1	3	2	4
Group 2					
Group 3					
Group 4					

Common Score =					

6. Next, read the group 'some new details' that have emerged regarding the Leila story:

LEILA is a 17-year-old pupil at a secondary grammar school and MOHAMED is her teacher, who is happily married. AHMED also teaches at the same secondary school. MOHAMED is his colleague. TARIK is LEILA'S grandfather, who has not met his favourite grandchild for long, and with whom he is having tea together; they talked the whole night. DZSAFAR is a psychopath killer. It is sheer luck that he has only slapped MOHAMED in the face.

Debriefing:

Ask participants how they are reacting to what they have just heard. What does this tell us about how we make judgements? Summarize by talking about the boundaries we have in our own cultural frames of reference.

Renting my apartment

Duration: 60 minutes

When to use it? When starting to talk about "intercultural competence" and cultural bias.

Goal/Learning aims: Participants will understand the effect of prejudices and stereotypes in normal life and how can we develop our intercultural competence.

Materials needed: Flipchart, marker.

Full description of the activity:

1.   Tell participants that you are going to share a story with them. "Imagine you have saved some money and bought a house. You have invested your last cents and worked yourself on the roof and painted the walls. After your house is finished you want to rent out the apartment above."

2.   Tell the participants that there are five interested parties to rent your flat (also write them on a flipchart paper so everyone can see it).

–   A Buddhist community (10 members, they will use it for their practices and mediation).

–   A migrant family from Syria (parents with 3 children), father is working at a Gyros place.

–   3 students from Iran, studying at the Medical University.

–   A gay couple known from the media.

–   A young couple with a baby, father is looking for work.

3. Tell participants they are each going to do their own personal ranking of the given characters. *"You have five scores (1 to 5) and five applicants. You have to rank the applicants, whom would you like to give the most. Give your favourite applicant the highest score of five. Give your least favourite applicant the score of 1. Rank each applicant. "*

4. Break into small groups. Each group comes to agreement on common scores/rankings based on what they heard. Give participants about 10 minutes to complete this task. Ask them to write the PRO-s and CON-s, and how they reached a consensus.

5. Draw a chart on the flipchart. Ask each group to say their scores and ask them why they rated the characters as they did.

Debriefing:

Point out how stereotypes affect our daily decisions and how discrimination arises out of it. Summarize by talking about how developing our intercultural competence help to make decisions based on real facts and not biases.

---

[1] Source: Education for Social Justice. Training Manual. (2003) International Step by Step Association

Encounter of 3 Cultures

Duration: 30 minutes

When to use it? When starting to talk about meeting the "other" and culturally sensitive areas.

Goal/Learning aims: This activity helps people to see how differences are observed and how we make judgements based on what we observe and do not understand.

Materials needed: Bell or whistle, stickers in 3 colours, 3 rules written on a piece of paper.

Full description of the activity:

1. Random divide the group in 3 subgroups.

2. Name each group by their colour (red, yellow, green) and ask them to put their coloured sticker on a visible place so others can recognize it.

3. Ask each group to go to a corner of the room, as far away from the other groups as possible.

4. Tell participants: *"Each group represents a culture which has its own specific rules of behaviour. I will give you a handout that explains the rules of behaviour for your culture."* Share each group their rules on a written paper in a way that others cannot see or hear it and ask them to memorize it.

Rules of Behaviour for Culture Green

They move slowly. When they receive a question, they count in themselves to 6 and step back 2 steps before saying anything. When asked «How are you? » they cover their eyes with hands. At the sound of bell (whistle) they cover their ears with their hands.

Rules of Behaviour for Culture Red

They speak loudly, use large gestures, and interrupt the others often. They like to touch the other on the shoulder as they talk. As soon as they meet someone, they ask «How are you? ». At the sound of bell (whistle) they stretch out ("greeting the sun").

Rules of Behaviour for Culture Yellow

They speak softly, ask often "How are you?" "Where are you from?". They keep half a meter distance from their interlocutor (retreating). At the sound of bell (whistle) they bow down.

5. After the group members memorized their group rules, tell them: **"You will meet others while walking across in the room, and you must stick to the rules of your culture, no matter what happens. Ask others whatever you wish – whatever you are interested in – but at the same time you must obey the rules of your culture. Walk about freely and talk about whatever you want."**

6. Now start the game, ask participants to move in the room, so people from all three cultures will go for a walk to get to know others.

7. The activity usually lasts to 3-5 minutes, but depending on your assessment it could be longer. Ring the bell (or blow the whistle) approximately every 30 second. When you feel that participants are getting out of their roles, stop the game.

6. Have participants return to their group and write down the impressions of the other two groups they encountered. Have them give names to the other cultures.

7. Give the groups time to work. Then they will all come together in the large group.

8. Have each group talk about the other cultures, writing down the key points on chart paper.

9. Talk with participants about how they drew their conclusions about the other groups. "What was your evidence for drawing conclusions?" "How did you feel about what the other groups said about your culture?"

Debriefing:

Be sure to make the point that stereotypes emerge on the basis of some truth around which generalizations are made. Through interpretation and generalization about truths, stereotypes are formed. Emphasize the difference between observation and interpretation. Introduce the concept of a positive stereotype.

Introduce the context of "Culturally sensitive areas", that are often the cause of cross-cultural miscommunication. Let participants to share their cross-cultural experiences and name culturally sensitive areas. Some examples are:

- communication styles

- nonverbal communication, display of emotion, personal space

- dress, punctuality, and formality

- religion, class, ethnicity, and gender

- family roles

- eating habits

Lemonland

Duration: 60 minutes

When to use it? When starting to talk about the risks in the process of integration and interculturalism.

Goal/Learning aims: Participants will understand the issues of minority-majority dynamics and the different needs that are connected with the process of integration and interculturalism.

Materials needed: Assorted fruits and vegetables, flipchart paper, markers.

You will need to prepare for this activity by having lemons (one for each group), as well as other fruits and vegetables (one for each group). These might include an orange, apple, banana, grapefruit, beet, onion, pepper and so on.

Full description of the activity:

1. Have participants form groups of 4-5 and hand 1 piece of lemon to each group.

2. Ask participants to brainstorm about the characteristics of their lemons. Tell the participants:

   - *"This is your lemon that represents your country."*

   - *"Study your lemon closely and give your country a **name**."*

   - *"Please collect the main **characteristics** of your country (government and politics, economy, demographics, culture, etc.) so you can present it to the other groups."*

   - *"Then take a few minutes to create a **song**, a rhyme/poem or a motto that celebrates your country."*

3. Now have each group introduce its country and sing their song or whatever they have chosen to the rest of the groups.

4. Next tell the group:

   - *"Things are changing in Lemonland. One day a new fruit or vegetable appears in Lemonland. [Give a different fruit or vegetable to each group.]"*

   - *"You are the Supreme Council of your Lemonland, and you need to decide whether or not to accept this new fruit/vegetable into your country."*

   - *"Write your reasons for and against accepting the new fruit/vegetable on a chart paper."*

   - *"Then after you give the pro's and con's, tell us your decision whether to accept or reject the newcomer."*

5. Have each group report. Reading the reasons for and against acceptance, finishing with their decision.

Debriefing:

Point out the conflict of needs (e.g., we want to open up and to preserve our authenticity and identity). You may wish to highlight how homogenous groups fear change that is brought by novelty (new people, new habits, new qualities). Invite participants to think how different needs could be harmonized, how the paradox of at least two equally important, but conflicted needs could be overcome. You may wish to show examples.

The visitor game

Duration: 30 minutes

When to use it? When starting to talk about intercultural competence

Goal/Learning aims: Participants will understand what are the challenges of communicating with other cultures. The activity is designed to demonstrate that what is normal in one culture may not be normal in another culture.

Materials needed: none.

Full description of the activity:

1. Before starting the activity, ask 2 volunteers from the group, who will be the visitors, and the rest of the group will be the host group.

2. Send the visitor group out of the room and tell them you will brief them in a minute.

3. When the visitors left, tell the hosts that they are about to be visited by the visitors. The role of the host group is to welcome the visitors, and being naturally curious people, to ask them some questions about where they are from, why they are here, how long they are staying and about the culture of the country they are from. In particular, they should try to find out as much as possible about their cultural habits, customs, and behaviour.

4. The hosts have one rule. They can ask only closed questions, which can only be answered with "yes" or "no". So "Are you from a European country?" is a good question, but "Where are you from" is not allowed. Leave the host group to plan their strategy and prepare their questions.

5. Go outside the room and brief the visitors. Explain that they will be asked lots of "yes/no" questions, and they can only answer by saying "yes" or "no" or have to fix the

communication rules for the visitors. For setting up the communication rule, half of the host group need to have one thing in common with each other, but different from the other half (like wearing glasses, wearing a sport shoes, having a light-coloured shirt, wearing trousers, having short hair, etc.).

RULE 1. Hosts divide themselves, for example Visitor A always answers the question when it comes from someone wearing glasses (or having sport shoes, etc.) and Visitor B always answers the question if it comes from someone not wearing glasses.

RULE 2. If people are smiling (are serious) when they ask the question, they must always be given the answer "yes", no matter what the question is. If people are not smiling (are serious) when they ask the question, they must always be given the answer "no", no matter what the question is.

6. The simulation should last about 10 minutes. At first it will go well, but after a while the host group will start to realize that something is wrong - visitors give apparently contradictory answers. They may then try to work out the "rules" of the visitors, but they rarely succeed. When the host group is running out of questions and may be starting to get bored or frustrated, stop the activity.

Debriefing:

Debrief the simulation by asking the host group these questions:

How did you feel during the activity?

They will probably say something like "frustrated", "embarrassed", "confused", etc. Write them on the flipchart.

What opinion did you form of the visitors?

They will probably say something like "unfriendly", "unhelpful", "inconsistent", etc. Write them on the flipchart.

Then ask the visitors to explain their rules. There will be general laughter at how simple it all was. Tell the hosts that they started out by making the assumption that because the visitors looked like them, they expected they would behave like them and answer the questions in a "normal" way, according to the host rules. But the visitors had other rules. In fact, we all have perceptions and form impressions of other cultures by filtering what we observe through our own cultural filter, and we can be completely wrong. We may make quick judgement about people based on misinformed perceptions.

- initial impressions can be misleading

- behaviour can be interpreted differently

- different rules often apply

- what normal to us, may not be normal to other cultures

---

[1] Source: Education for Social Justice. Training Manual. (2003) International Step by Step Association

[2] Source: Education for Social Justice. Training Manual. (2003) International Step by Step Association

[3] Source is LTS training and consulting: Developing intercultural training skills.

EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE - HANDOUTS FOR PARTICIPANTS

Definition of social justice as a recognition that:

- all people are individuals, but we are also members of socially constructed groups;

- society is stratified, and social groups are valued unequally;

- social groups that are valued more highly have greater access to resources and this access is structured into the institutions and cultural norms;

- social injustice is real and exists today;

- relations of unequal power are constantly being enacted at both the micro (individual) and macro (structural) levels;

- we are all socialized to be complicit in these relations;

- those who claim to be for social justice must strategically act from that claim in ways that challenge social injustice;

- and this action requires a commitment to an ongoing and lifelong process.

(Sensoy, DiAngelo, 2014).

What does it mean to foreground social justice in our thinking about education?

These include:

- democratic education,

- critical pedagogy,

- multiculturalism,

- poststructuralism,

- feminism,

- queer theory,

- anti-oppressive education,

- cultural studies,

- postcolonialism,

- globalization,

- critical race theory.

(Hytten, Bettez, 2011)

Seven skills, practices, and dispositions of activist social justice education:

(1) promoting a mind/body connection,

(2) conducting artful facilitation that promotes critical thinking,

(3) engaging in explicit discussions of power, privilege, and oppression,

(4) maintaining compassion for students,

(5) believing that change toward social justice is possible,

(6) exercising self-care,

(7) building critical communities.

(Hytten, Bettez, 2008)

Five essential knowledge base components of social justice education:

- mastery of content in their discipline (including knowing factual information, having the ability to historically contextualize that information and being able to consider it in both micro and macro ways),

- tools for critical thinking and analysis,

- tools for social change and activism,

- tools for personal reflection (especially about one's own power and privilege),

- awareness of multicultural group dynamics.

(Hackman, 2005)

Educators for social justice (Grant, Gillette, 2006):

- need to be culturally responsive in the classroom,

- to know themselves and be open to change,

- to hold a well-developed philosophy of education,

- to have substantial pedagogical content knowledge, to maintain an educational psychology that is multicultural,

- to connect teacher education to the world outside of school,

- to be reflective,

- to analyse and act on teacher-generated research data,

- to communicate and collaborate,

- to build relationships,

- to arrange learning environments

- to use technology as a teaching-learning tool.

Creating a democratic atmosphere in which everyone participates (Adair & Howell, 2001)

- Speak for yourself instead of generalizing - *use I statements*.

- Respect differences - *everyone's opinion matters*.

- Challenge ideas not people.

- Stay open and engaged - *be responsible for your own learning*.

- Don't judge.

- Assume good intentions.

- Don't attack people who disagree with you.

- Treat others, as you would like to be treated.

- Don't take things personally.

- Laugh with anyone but laugh at no one.

Social justice educators guide students in commitments along at least three fronts:

First,

critical analysis of the presentation of mainstream knowledge as neutral, universal, and objective.

For example, examinations of various accounts of a given historical event (school accounts versus news media accounts versus pop culture accounts). The goal of this analysis is to understand how knowledge is socially constructed and never neutral or free of the social context that produced it.

Second,

critical self-reflection of their own socialization into structured relations of oppression and privilege. (act like a boy/girl). These exercises help identify their placement in a matrix of social groups and the messages received through those placements.

Third,

Developing the skills with which to see, analyse, and challenge relations of oppression and privilege. For example to participate in cultural events, work with case studies, and brainstorm strategies for working with youth on social justice action projects in their schools and communities.

The educators must guide students in:

• Engaging constructively with alternative perspectives,

• thinking critically,

• grappling with multiple perspectives,

• building stamina for engaging with new and challenging ideas,

• raising critical questions,

• tolerating ambiguity,

• recognizing the power relations embedded in positionality, and valuing collaboration over competition.

The educators for social justice

1

- Strive for intellectual humility.

- Be willing to grapple with challenging ideas.

- Differentiate between an opinion shared by everyone, and informed knowledge, which comes from sustained experience, study, and practice.

- Hold your opinions lightly and with humility.

- Let go of personal anecdotal evidence and look at broader group-level patterns.

- Notice your own defensive reactions and attempt to use these reactions as entry points for gaining deeper self-knowledge, rather than as a rationale for closing off.

2

- Recognize how your own social positionality (e.g., race, class, gender, sexuality, ability) informs your perspectives and reactions to your instructor and those whose work you study in the course.

- Differentiate between safety and comfort.

- Accept discomfort as necessary for social justice growth.

- Identify where your learning edge is and push it.

  For example, whenever you think, *I already know this,* ask yourself, *How can I take this deeper?* Or, *How am I applying in practice what I already know?*

Principles For Culturally Responsive Teaching According to Vicky Hargreaves

1

Reflecting on oneself and one's own culture

- **Reflect on** particular decision points or teaching practices and interactions with diverse families that you find challenging or uncomfortable, in order to uncover hidden values and beliefs.
- **Consider** in what ways your practices and routines are influenced by dominant cultural practices, particularly regarding eating, sleeping, toileting, communication, reading and play.
- **Notice** how pedagogical and bureaucratic practices, for example, valuing children's independence (which marks some children as needy or deficient), or notions of parent partnership (which is not appropriate or easy for some families), privilege some families over others, and critically examine whether your perspective on 'quality' early childhood education needs to be adapted to incorporate diverse perspectives.

2

Reflecting on other cultures

- **Develop** your cross-cultural competency by immersing yourself in real life experiences in order to develop connections and deep understanding and take every opportunity to become involved in family and community events.

- **Find out** about the specific practices, perspectives and beliefs of families, and <u>aim to understand</u>.

- **Appreciate** different ways of viewing children's development, which doesn't mean discarding your own beliefs and practices, but instead stretching your knowledge and thinking to be open to possibilities that are not necessarily incompatible.

- **Use** minority families' multiple meanings and perspectives to help you deconstruct practice and critically challenge the status quo and longstanding pedagogical practices and beliefs.

3

Developing positive attitudes towards diversity

- **Develop** positive environments that are inclusive, safe, caring, and respectful, where difference is seen as normal and there is unconditional acceptance for all children and families.

- **Enact** values such as being welcoming, kindness, hospitality, taking care of and responsibility for others, and respect, and reinforce them daily: for example, you might have a teacher stand at the door as families arrive and as they leave, to secure an interaction with each family for welcome and farewell.

- **Share** a belief that all children can succeed and see success as complex regarding children and families' diversity.

4

Working with families as a valuable resource

- **Promote** conversation and dialogue through careful use of time and space, and lots of cups of tea or coffee. Convey to families that you

really want to understand and focus on receiving and acknowledging families' perspectives rather than on projecting your own ideas or trying to interpret the situation from your own cultural, philosophical, and pedagogical standpoint.

- **Engage** in discussions about values, sharing your own experiences, beliefs, and values, and encouraging families to talk about their own values, perhaps using general knowledge about a family's culture as a basis for conversation. Weave families' values into the curriculum and negotiate goals, pedagogies, and programmes. Aim for a paralleling of different perspectives that grants value to each, rather than attempting to merge minority views into the dominant culture or picking the 'best' way.

- **Acknowledge** and **address** cultural inequities and disadvantages. Be aware of common areas of disconnect and try to be proactive in identifying the critical issues for families. Create opportunities to discuss these in ways that are respectful, non-judgemental, and participatory.

- **Encourage** families to play active roles in the setting. Don't pressure families to share or perform aspects of their culture but focus on valuing the cultural practices of minority families and building confidence in families to share their practices with the setting's community.

- **Encourage** families to participate in constructing knowledge about children, and in decision-making about children's learning and development through conversations or e-portfolio annotations.

5

Observing and analysing

- **Spend** time observing what families do and how they talk about what they do, as well as who children are, how they think, what they value and everything they can do.

- **Respond** to conversations initiated by children and ask children about their families, what they did over the weekend, and what they are interested in. Notice the ways children communicate: consider how they do or do not use humour, relate to other people, approach new tasks, and react to praise.

- **Look** out for children expressing their working theories about their culture, identity, and language, and intentionally plan conversations and provocations to encourage children to share their thinking.

- **Consider** themes of power and inequity when observing children. For example, note patterns in interactions that indicate social exclusion, and ways in which children are using culturally diverse materials.

6

Responding

- **Design** learning experiences that position children as experts in relation to their particular interests and funds of knowledge from home and enable them to utilise familiar learning strategies. Make pedagogical decisions that suit children's particular characteristics and learning preferences rather than a generic ideal.

- **Value** playful ways of knowing and being to empower children's language, play and ideas, and to create space for them to explore their home and community funds of knowledge.

- **Offer** various opportunities to learn, including learning through observation, trying things on their own, or with a partner or group. Support children's own strategies for managing interactions and activities in the setting and encourage the use of cultural strategies (such as home language, social choices such as high respect for teachers, parental practices, and attitudes to learning such as persistence and commitment) as well as interactions and relationships with peers and teachers of a similar cultural and language background.

- **Negotiate** caregiving routines sensitively and use culturally familiar language and cultural norms in interactions with children, for example, using humour, or using direct requests ('put on your coat') rather than indirect requests ('do you think you could put on your coat?').

- **See** all aspects of the curriculum, including ideas of child-centred play and exploration, as open to challenge and reworking, and find relevant, local concepts for responsive curriculum and assessment.

- Explicitly **interrogate** incidents of racism and cultural stereotyping and engage children's curiosity regarding social and cultural differences and similarities through group dialogue, problem solving and inquiry.

7

Resourcing

- **Invite** families into the setting and personalise opportunities for them to get involved. Seek people in the community to teach children about a different culture or language, but don't place boundaries around what might be contributed by a visitor and try to build sustained and reciprocal relationships rather than one-off events.
- If you have a minority cultural background, **implement** your own cultural resources within the setting's programme.
- **Be careful** not to celebrate superficial differences (such as food choices) and dig deeper to identify resources that support children's and families' funds of knowledge.
- **Employ** staff from different cultural backgrounds, and particularly staff who share similar cultural backgrounds to the families that attend your setting. While encouraging children to use their home languages with teachers and each other, also intentionally learn phrases from children so that you can build on their linguistic skills during learning and teaching. Encourage children to teach each other their home languages.
- **Offer** open-ended and manipulative materials for children to construct and express meaning in their own way.

Readings

Cooper, M., & Hedges, H. (2014). Beyond participation: What we learned from Hunter about collaboration with Pasifika children and families. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood, 15*(2), 165-75.

Durand, T. M. (2010). Celebrating diversity in early care and education settings: Moving beyond the margins. *Early Child Development and Care*, *180* (7), 835-48. doi: 10.1080/03004430802466226

Mitchell, L., Bateman, A., & Ouko, A. (2015). *Teaching and learning in culturally diverse early childhood settings.* Hamilton, NZ: Wilf Malcolm Institute of Educational Research.

SOCIAL JUSTICE EDUCATION ACCORDING TO MADELEINE DOBSON

1

Social justice is often embraced in early childhood education and care as a vision and philosophy, which can drive pedagogical approaches. Central to this is a focus on creating more equitable and ethical spaces where all children can participate, and where children can relate to each other and to their communities in thoughtful and compassionate ways. When we engage with social justice in the early years, we often seek to explore issues and ideas around gender, sexuality, race, culture, and our environment.

Social justice relates to a vision of equity for all. Understanding how different people and communities experience the world is key, particularly with consideration towards aspects of identity (such as gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, dis/ability, age, location), how these intersect and interact, and experiences of privilege and marginalisation.

2

Teaching for social justice involves meaningfully understanding children, their identities, and the lives they lead. This includes <u>recognition of children's cultures</u> and engaging in <u>culturally responsive pedagogies</u>, which can integrate critical literacy approaches to different texts, multicultural literature, and print-rich environments that are representative of diversity.

Important also to enacting a vision of social justice in ECE is developing a meaningful understanding of the impacts of trauma on children, families, and communities. <u>Trauma</u> can have a significant impact on people throughout

their lifetime. This may include Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) or events such as abuse, neglect, or natural disasters, which may be experienced individually or collectively (COVID-19).

Intersectionality: The connection or intersection of different aspects of a person's identity, such as gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, dis/ability. Examining identity through an intersectional lens helps in understanding multiple and overlapping factors that can create dis/advantage, marginalisation, or privilege for people and communities.

Marginalisation: Marginalisation relates to the exclusionary social positioning and limitation or denial of rights, status, access, opportunities, and/or resources to particular people or groups. It may be related to aspects of a person's identity or lived experience.

Privilege: Social privilege refers to the advantage and power afforded to particular people or groups based on their identity/identities or status within society.

Readings

Chapman, R. (2022.) Moving beyond 'gender-neutral': creating gender expansive environments in early childhood education. *Gender and Education, 34*(1),16.

 http://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2021.1902485

Hargraves, V. (2019). Principles for culturally responsive teaching in early childhood education.

https://theeducationhub.org.nz/principles-for-culturally-responsive-teaching-in-early-childhood-education/

Lee, S., Adair, J. K., Payne, K. A. & Barry, D. (2021). Revisioning fairness as social justice in Early Childhood Education. *Early Childhood Education Journal.* https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-021-01233-x

Martin, K., & Berger, E. (2022). Childhood trauma and its impact. https://theeducationhub.org.nz/childhood-trauma-and-its-impact-2

Sinclair, K. (2021). Disrupting normalised discourses: Ways of knowing, being and doing cultural competence. *The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education, 50*(1), 203-211.
 http://doi.org/10.1017/jie.2018.23

EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE - ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

WHAT CHILDREN ARE LIKE:

- *They love to talk.*

- *They love to touch, feel, and manipulate objects.*

- *They are egocentric.*

- *They play beside each other before playing with their partner.*

- *They enjoy the element of fantasy.*

- *They love praise, positive reinforcement.*

- *They mimic and model behaviour.*

- *They talk spontaneously.*

- *They want to be heard.*

- *They like choices and situations they can control.*

- *They want to share.*

- *They are honest.*

COMMUNITY CIRCLE DISCUSSION

- *Today is going to be a good day because …*

- *I know someone loves me when…*

- *What is your favourite fairy tale? Why?*

- *If a hockey stick wasn't a hockey stick, what else could it be?*

- *What would be a good name for a new dinosaur? Sing-a-saurus?*

- *What do you think I should get my wife/husband for her/his birthday?*

- *I feel great when…*

- *I feel angry when…*

- *I feel sleepy when…*

- *My mom thinks I'm…*

- *My dad thinks I'm…*

- *My favourite toy is…*

- *My favourite food is…*

- *The place I like best to be is…*

TWO ON A CRAYON

1. Have the community form pairs.

2. Give each pair one crayon and one piece of construction paper.

3. Explain that both partners will hold the crayon simultaneously and draw a picture together while a three- or four-minute song is played in the background. Tell the children that partners may not decide before the activity what kind of picture they will draw together, and they may not talk to each other while they are drawing.

Reflection Questions

1. Content/Thinking: What did you draw? What does it present?

2. Social: Was it difficult to not talk to your partner? How did this activity help you get to know your partner? How did you decide who would lead and who would follow?

3. Personal: Did you discover anything new about yourself?

GROUP PORTRAIT

1. Divide children into groups.

2. Explain to the children that each group will draw a self-portrait and the portrait will include individual drawings of each group member.

3. Ask the community to meet in groups, get their materials, and find a space to work.

4. Discuss possible put-downs that could occur and how to avoid them.

5. Each group member asks one other member to do a sketch of him or her.

6. "Artists" draw their subjects using pencils.

7. After completing portraits, artists check with subjects for any additions or corrections.

8. Then the artists use marking pens on portraits.

9. When the portraits of all the group members are finished, the tribe decides how to present their portraits to the rest of the class.

Reflection Questions

1. Content/Thinking: Why was it easy/difficult to draw a group portrait?

2. Social: How did this task require you to work together? How well did you work together?

3. Personal: How did you feel when your portrait was being done? How did you feel when you saw your portrait?

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

CONTENT/THINKING - focused on the content of the activity, and on the thinking skills that were used in order to work with the content – facts, concepts, and information.

COLLABORATIVE/SOCIAL - focused on the interaction that happens within a learning group and on the collaborative skills that were used.

PERSONAL – focused on what the individual has learned or felt.

EXAMPLE

1.

CONTENT: *Which fruits did your group put into your salad? Tell me what they were.*

THINKING: *What did you have to do to get the different fruits ready for the salad?*

2.

COLLABORATIVE: *What did your group do when some people started to eat the cherries instead of putting them into your group's salad?*

3.

PERSONAL: *What did you learn? Why did you like doing this?*

MASK MAKING

(2020 Anti-Defamation League, www.adl.org/education)

Making and wearing masks can open a conversation with children about identity, showing respect for others, and the impact of stereotypes and bias on interpersonal communication when someone is wearing a mask. While you make masks together you could talk about how a mask can <u>reflect something important about your identity</u>, either through the fabric design, or drawings, images and words you add to the mask.

With children, you can talk about how masks have been used to <u>convey bias and hate</u> and how certain kinds of <u>masks and costumes</u> can spread stereotypes and bias. It's also important to consider why some identity groups (e.g., Roma) may <u>have concerns about wearing a mask</u> because of stereotypes others have about them.

Discussion

- How can you use your mask to express an aspect of your identity?
- How can we make connections with people as we go out into the world wearing masks that hide parts of our faces?
- How do stereotypes about Roma (or other minorities) people contribute to the fear they may have about wearing masks in public?

SYMBOLS OF RESPECT AND INCLUSION

(2020 Anti-Defamation League, www.adl.org/education)

We see symbols every day—they are all around on buildings, in the street, on schoolyards, on our phones and in digital spaces. Symbols convey ideas, qualities, feelings, objects, opinions, and beliefs. Unfortunately, symbols are also used to spread bias and hate. Explore the idea that symbols can be positive (blow kiss emoji), neutral (Instagram logo) or negative (Swastika). Brainstorm symbols that express positive values and concepts such as respect, diversity, inclusion, love, acceptance, and friendship. Then use art materials or go online to create symbols that represent these qualities. Finish your project by identifying ways to share the symbols you created with your pupils.

Discussion

- Why are symbols important?
- What symbols have you noticed and are they positive, negative or neutral?
- How can symbols of respect and inclusion make a difference in your community and the larger society?

SELF-PORTRAITS

Creating self-portraits is an opportunity to reflect on the physical aspects of our identity. Use paint, markers, coloured pencils, or crayons, to create individual or family portraits. Make sure your art supplies reflect the variety of colours, shades and complexions that represent a diversity of people. Before creating your self-portraits, start a conversation about different aspects of our physical identity. You might concentrate on your faces or look at your faces and bodies together. Encourage children to look in the mirror and describe the shape of their face; skin colour and complexion; eye shape and colour; hair colour, texture, length, and style; nose shape; and other characteristics like birthmarks, freckles, glasses, braces, etc. Then make your self-portraits using all the information you just gathered.

Discussion

- What do you notice about your self-portrait?
- How does your self-portrait reflect aspects of your identity in terms of race, ethnicity, and other identity characteristics?
- How do you look similar to and different from people in your family, friends, and classmates?

LEMON PEEL

BY SUSAN VERNER

This is a simple activity in which you will need one lemon for every member of your class.

Give each child a lemon and tell them to get to know their lemon by observing it closely. Talk about the different adjectives you could use to describe the lemons. Then collect everyone's lemons, put them in a bowl together, and ask children to find their lemon. They shouldn't have too much trouble finding the lemon they had before.

The next day before your students arrive in class, peel all the lemons and put them together in a bowl again. Once class starts, ask your students to find the lemon they had yesterday. Now that the peels are gone, students will not be able to determine which lemon was theirs.

After students have given up trying to find their lemon, talk about how the lemons can represent people. Everyone has things on the outside which make us different, which other people can see just by looking at us. But when we look past the outer skin, we are all the same on the inside. If you like, challenge students to write about a time when they judged someone based on what they saw or when someone judged them based on what they saw.

INEQUALITY IN THE CLASSROOM

BY SUSAN VERNER

In this hands-on activity, students will see how access to different resources affects their potential.

Divide your class in half. To one half, give good quality art materials such as sharp scissors, collared pencils, crayons, glitter, glue, and whatever other supplies you have on hand. To the other group, give only plain white paper and some dull crayons. Then ask each person to make the best-looking doll that they can. If you like, have students complete the assignment again with the other set of materials. After students finish, display the different dolls. Point out how some students had better resources and how those resources enabled them to make better quality projects. Then talk about how poverty can affect the potential of children around the world. Close the activity by brainstorming with your students how they can work to decrease the effects of poverty on children throughout the world.

RELATIVE

BY MARY BISHOP

THE FAMILY TREE

You will need a large family tree, illustrating mother, father, sisters, brothers, grandparents, children, grandchildren, aunts, uncles, and cousins. Each branch should have a picture and the title of the person clearly written. You will need to go over the family tree slowly and clearly, reviewing as you go along to make sure the students are picking up the pronunciation and meaning of the words.

You will need to make a worksheet that is a smaller version of the family tree you presented in the last activity with the pictures in it but leave the titles blank. Put all the titles on a separate page. Have the students cut out the titles and place them in the correct positions. Have students volunteer to read the titles to review pronunciation of the family words.

VARIOUS FAMILY MEMBERS

This activity will help your students to learn the many different titles or names that can be used for a person in the family. For example, a grandmother can be called: Grandma, Grandmother, Nana, Grammy...

Your lists will vary depending on where you live. Start by explaining that there are many names for various family members. Make several columns: one each for mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, and any other title you are going to include. Show students the alternate titles on cards and

have them guess in which column they should go, correcting them as necessary. Discuss as you go. Then take the cards off, and have students place the cards in the correct columns on their own.

Titles such as stepmother and father-in-law are necessary for everyday conversation. Present this vocabulary with your family tree again. You can show them the relationships on the tree and label them as such. Afterwards, take off the titles and have students try to put them in the right spots. This could also be a great time to review the original family tree vocabulary.

VARIOUS FAMILY MEMBERS 2

Choose ten people (or a more appropriate number for you, depending on your class size) to participate. Divide them into two groups of five. Have them each name their team. You will need to have questions prepared where the answers are the vocabulary terms from the family tree, and a bell or some type of noisemaker for each team. For each question, one member from each team comes up to you. You ask the question, and the first one to ring their bell gets to answer. If that person is right, his team gets the point. If he is wrong, the opposing member gets a chance to answer it. The first team to get ten points wins. This game can become competitive and is fun for the students.

VARIOUS FAMILY MEMBERS 3

Stand with the class in a circle. You will need a large ball to play this game. Begin by saying the title of a family member and throwing the ball to a

student. As soon as he catches it, that student must say a different title of a family member, and then immediately throw the ball to another student. That student in turn must throw it to another who gives yet another family member title. This continues until a student catches the ball and cannot immediately think of a family member title, and that student is then "out." He must leave the circle. This continues at a rapid pace until there is just one student left. That student is the winner. Students of all ages enjoy this fast-paced game.

VARIOUS FAMILY MEMBERS 4

In this game, one student sits in a chair facing the board, and another student sits in a chair directly behind him. The rest watch until it is their turn. You show the first student the picture and title of a family member, and that student must describe the family member to the second student without naming the title. If the first student accidentally names the title, he is out, and another student from the class sits there and describes. When the student with his back to the class guesses the title, he gets to face the board in the hot seat, and another student is chosen to be the one who guesses. This game is a lot of fun and allows students to use their language skills from previous lessons when giving a description.

THIS IS OUR HOUSE

Assign students to read, or read to them, *"This is Our House"* by Michael Rosen. In this book, George, the main character, creates a cardboard box. When other children come and try to play in the box, George turns them away for their outward characteristics. The story teaches students that everyone looks different, and it is hurtful when others are treated poorly because they are a girl, have red hair, etc. Have kids create their own "cardboard box," and have everyone go inside it.

COLLAGE OF CONCERNS

Students create visual artwork combining various images to convey diversity or social justice issues, concerns or themes related to the central text.

Collage is a powerful visual artistic medium through which students can express their ideas, understandings, and feelings.

1. Gather magazines, newspapers, catalogues, and other recycled images to use.

2. Share examples of and define collages with students.

3. Adapt the sample rubric into a visual checklist. Refer to the rubric to define expectations and components of effective collages before students begin working.

4. Verbally introduce students to the preparatory steps. Instruct them in the process of mapping the steps necessary to prepare their collages.

5. As a class, brainstorm possible content for the collages. Review topics, and themes. List students' concerns and ideas in a location visible to the whole class.

6. Share materials with students. Encourage them to experiment with combining different images. Help very young students cut out desired images.

7. In addition to recycled materials, students can also add in their own illustrations to emphasize social justice, anti-bias, or diversity issues. Students can also include possible solutions or imagined changes that relate to their concerns.

8. Instruct students to orally describe their work.

9. Invite visitors to a gallery walk to view the collages. Consider including:

    1. Families

    2. Other classes

    3. Other grades

    4. Members of the greater school community.

10. Invite visitors to leave comments, connections, and questions for the artists on sticky notes.

11. If students feel comfortable, consider displaying the portraits outside of the classroom so other members of the school community can observe students' work.

12. Facilitate a class discussion. Possible topics include:

    1. Reflecting on the process of creating the collage.

    2. Describing how their collage connects to central text themes.

    3. Considering how their collage can impact the community.

    4. Envisioning possible solutions to concerns.

This task allows young students to express their thoughts and feelings about important social justice issues. The visual component of the task allows each student to explore the powerful combination of images and ideas. Students and members of the school community can gain deeper insight into issues students care about by observing each other's work.

KID-FRIENDLY PRINCIPLES

BY LALEÑA GARCIA

Kid-friendly version of the 13 principles by Lalena Garcia

Principle	Description
Retroactive Justice	We know if you hurt somebody you have to help them feel better. You can't just say I'm sorry and walk away. We also know that it is important for children to be able to make a better choice another time and it's grown ups job to help them make better choices and to give them chances to do that.
Empathy	It's so important to think about how other people feel, because different people have different feelings. Sometimes it helps to think about how you would feel if the same thing that happened to your friend happened to you.
Loving Engagement	It's so important to are you sure that we are always trying to be fair and peaceful, ends to engage with other people (treat other people) with love. We have to keep practicing it know that we can get better and better at it.
Diversity	Different people do different things and have different feelings. It's so important that we have lots of different kinds of people in our community and that everyone feels safe.
Globalism	Globalism means that we are thinking about all the different people all over the world, and thinking about the ways to keep things fair everywhere.
Collective Value	Everybody is important, and has the right to be safe and happy.
Intergenerational	It's important that we have spaces where people of different ages can come together and learn from each other. Another way to say that is intergenerational.

TALKING TO YOUNG CHILDREN ABOUT THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE MOVEMENT FOR BLACK LIVES

ADOPTED FOR EUROPEAN CONDITIONS

As we think about discussing big ideas with little people, we consider age-appropriate language so that our students or children can grasp the concepts we're introducing and incorporate these ideas and language into their own thinking and conversation.

Whenever possible, make connections to children's lived experience, in your classroom, your home, or out in the world.

Restorative Justice is the commitment to build a beloved and loving community that is sustainable and growing.

We know that if you knock down someone's block building, you must help them rebuild it, you can't just say, "Sorry," and walk away. We also know that it's important for kids to be able to make a better choice another time, and it's grownups' job to help them make better choices and to give them chances to do that. Another way to say that is restorative justice.

Empathy is one's ability to connect with others by building relationships built on mutual trust and understanding.

It's so important to think about how other people feel because different people have different feelings. Sometimes it helps to think about how you would feel if the same thing that happened to your friend happened to you. Another way to say that is empathy.

Loving Engagement is the commitment to practice justice, liberation, and peace.

It's so important to make sure that we are always trying to be fair and peaceful, and to engage with other people (treat other people) with love. We must keep practicing this so that we can get better and better at it. Another way to say that is loving engagement.

Diversity is the celebration and acknowledgment of differences and commonalities across cultures.

Different people do different things and have different feelings. It's so important that we have lots of different kinds of people in our community and that everyone feels safe. Another way to say that is diversity.

Globalism is our ability to see how we are impacted or privileged within the global family that exists across the world in different regions.

Globalism means that we are thinking about all the different people all over the world and thinking about the ways to keep things fair everywhere.

Collective Value means that all people live, regardless of actual or perceived sexual identity, gender identity, gender expression, economic status, ability, disability, religious beliefs or disbeliefs, immigration status or location, matter.

Everybody is important and has the right to be safe and happy. Another way to say that is collective value.

Intergenerational is a space free from ageism where we can learn from each other.

It's important that we have spaces where people of different ages can come together and learn from each other. Another way to say that is intergenerational.

CULTURAL NORMS

BY SUSAN VERNER

You can **discuss the culture of families**.

Who typically lives in the same house? Where does a newly married couple live? How many children are typical in your culture? How are older family members treated differently from younger ones? Are there responsibilities that come with certain family roles? (e.g., oldest son or daughter) Who cares for family members when they are unable to take care of themselves? All of these are great discussion questions that will keep your students talking to each other for hours. Discussions will be especially enlightening if your class is made up of students from different cultures.

Inspiring Practices for Education for Social Justice in ECD from around Europe

"PRIMA INFANZIA SOCIAL CLUB" - ITALY

"Not looking for favours, but possibilities for all children" (quoting F.V.)	

Target groups:	Fragile households with 0–6-year-olds excluded from school and social assistance and to single women without family networks, victims of violence, trafficking, residents in occupied buildings and migrants.
Focus:	Non-formal educational paths for 0-6 years old children to combat educational, social, and economic poverty of fragile households, with the active participation of mothers, and support in accessing formal schooling.

Objectives: The project has been funded by the social enterprise CON I BAMBINI, was launched in 2018 and is currently run by a private-public partnership (universities, social economy organisations, public schools etc.). The goal is to combat educational, social, and economic poverty of fragile households with 0–6-year-olds excluded from school and social assistance. The intervention also intends to support mothers to facilitate their inclusion in a social and working context and offer them training opportunities. In addition, spaces will be offered for children's play and educational, sporting, and cultural activities.

Methodology: The initiative is located in the Esquilino district of Roma Capitale. The project created a Club for children 0-6 years old, the establishment of a psycho-pedagogical team aimed at activating self-empowerment paths for mothers, the establishment of a social theatre company and the creation of a path of scholastic inclusion for children. Finally, a training course on parenting and the strengthening of soft

skills and pre-school and post-school reconciliation actions has been activated for children aged 3-6.

Main challenges faced: educational poverty and ignorance of children' rights by families; bureaucracy; digital divide (e.g. while registering for accessing public educational services).

Impact: The recipients of the intervention are to date about 180 minors (0-6 years) and 105 women, mainly single women, without family networks, victims of violence, inhabitants of occupied buildings and migrants. One of the project partners has been entrusted with the monitoring of the project's impact.

Conclusion: Suggestion: activation of community welfare processes, involving formal and non-formal actors and stakeholders, including parents, in the definition and implementation of the activities.

Contact:

Organisation, Town, Country: Associazione "Genitori Scuola Di Donato", Rome (IT)

Website: http://www.genitorididonato.it/,

https://www.facebook.com/primainfanziasocialclub/ and

https://percorsiconibambini.it/primainfanziasc/scheda-progetto/

Contact person: Francesca Valenza, President valenza.francesca@gmail.com and

primainfanziasc@gmail.com

SPERA intends to respond to the need for help of families who, living in fragile and vulnerable areas, show clear difficulties in guaranteeing adequate care for the psycho-affective development of young children

Target groups:	Direct recipients: children aged 0-6 who live in fragile Campania Region contexts - Mercato San Severino (Sa), Ponticelli (Na), Forcella (Na) and Scampia (Na). Indirect recipients: adults and the community; so the interventions are also aimed at strengthening parental empowerment and the informal network around them.
Focus:	Listening to complex territories, promoting opportunities for empowerment of parenting skills and psycho-affective well-being for children.

Objectives: This initiative is the result of collaborative efforts and pedagogical tactics shared by a number of third sector organisations that aim to work extensively and closely with local communities. It aims to address the needs of families living in vulnerable and fragile areas who face significant challenges in providing adequate support for the emotional and psychological development of their young children. These challenges arise from a lack of parenting resources and barriers to accessing essential services.

Methodology: The project is carried out at the regional level and involves 4 different realities and 2 different provinces (Naples and Salerno). It offers 3 macro-types of services, thanks to the collaboration between private social entities and institutions (schools, prisons, parishes):

1) Support for parenting by providing spaces for sharing and training (formal and informal) that favour the harmonious growth of the child;

2) Different educational and recreational spaces and experiences in contact with nature to be lived even with significant parents / adults;

3) The interventions have been conceived in a community care logic for which convivial and community initiatives are promoted.

Impact: The project is still active today and uses: - activity monitoring cards recording type of activity and number of participants; - evaluation questionnaires.

A video testimony has been produced and tells the project according to the experience of operators and parents and an operational notebook is being produced with a summary of the quantitative and qualitative data of the proposal.

Conclusion: With a view of taking global responsibility for families and their children, forms of participation are promoted to create shared identities and responsibilities, strengthening the relational fabric, and leveraging the social capital inherent in the network.

Contact:

Organisation, Town, Country:

Istituto Suore delle Poverelle

Largo Aldo Capitini,16

80145 (Napoli)

Tel. 338.6486071

Website: https://percorsiconibambini.it/spera/

Contact person: Mariapaola Ramaglia, communication manager S.P.E.R.A. project, spera@istitutopalazzolo.it

"ASSOCIAZIONE GENITORI SCUOLA DI DONATO" - Italy

Photo:

"The association is intercultural; it is not about mere inclusion but real integration of all children and their families. We live of the richness given by diversity also thanks to the parents' active role in the educational planning." (quoting M.Z.)

Target groups:	0-3 nursery 3-6 scuola dell'infanzia, internal to "Manin Institute"
Focus:	Professional development; services to promote social inclusion and accessibility of ECEC services - all courses are almost free throughout the day. However, the paid courses also foresee some free entries.

Objectives: Founded 17 years ago under the visionary leadership of Professor Bruno Cacco, the Association was created when parents were invited to repair the school's basement. From that pivotal moment, the association took root and now boasts a membership of over 300 people and is still based in the basement of the Istituto Comprensivo Manin. Its aim is to revitalise communal spaces, promote the joint participation of children and families, and provide a local centre with accessible spaces and rooms that are open until 10pm. It is a safe and welcoming place.

Methodology: For children aged 3 and over they also organise dance, motor skills and choir courses. The activities take place at the neighbourhood level, and the beneficiaries also come from other schools. Families come to courses from all over Rome (e.g. Nigerians, Filipinos, Bengalis). Possibility to stay and play in the courtyard and playroom with specialised operators. On Saturdays, a popular Arabic course is held for families from

the Arab community who want to learn Italian, while their children learn Arabic. However, it is a course open to the whole territory.

Impact: 300 families are currently registered; the courses involve about 500 people per year.

Conclusion: The suggestion to like-minded organisations is to give more importance to the common spaces, to be more present within territories, and richer also in furnishings. Key factor is to ensure training and upskilling for the staff involved in the activities.

Contact:

Organisation, Town, Country: ASSOCIAZIONE GENITORI SCUOLA DI DONATO, Rome, Italy

Website: www.genitorididonato.it

Contact person: Maura Zacchi

"BAMBINI: DALLA PERIFERIA AL CENTRO" - Italy

Photo:

"The initiative created a capillary network among families, the educating community and territory for the benefit of children 0-6, through the support of a sound public-private partnership." (Sara Funaro - Councillor of the Municipality of Florence (Tuscany Region, IT and member of the Education Commission, Educational Policies and School Building of AN – National Association of Italian Municipalities.

Target groups:	Vulnerable children 0-6 and their families, namely single parents
Focus:	Strengthening the accessibility to ECEC services by vulnerable children and their families; professional development of ECEC staff; high-quality services' provision and calibration; community welfare.

Objectives: Funded by the social enterprise Con I Bambini and implemented by a public-private partnership, the project aims to create and strengthen generative relationships by promoting an alliance between families and the territory, considered as the basis of a true educating community.

Methodology: The project involves the implementation of 10 different activities that intervene on support for maternity and parenthood, on the activation of experimental services to ensure greater accessibility to educational services, on the enhancement of educational services through the qualification of the skills of educators with experimental training courses, on the involvement of families (not only by offering experimental services and awareness of well-being but also by offering opportunities for aggregation and socialisation).

Impact: The project involves 67 ECEC settings (30 for children aged 0-3 and 37 for children aged 3-6) from 20 small, medium, and metropolitan cities covering 8 different Italian regions. 10 different services have been proposed in the ECEC settings involved, with a view to enhance the opportunities for targeted and innovative interventions dedicated to about 1.500 children, 380 parents (namely mothers) and the territory.

Conclusion: The public-private partnership and the involvement of a varied panel of territorial actors (from families to private actors and public authorities) represent the added values of the initiative. Also, sound ongoing and ex-post monitoring of its effectiveness and relevance allowed it to calibrate, strengthen and widen the impact of the services proposed, contributing to provide a solid basis for its sustainability and scalability potential over time. In particular, the consortium is currently looking for additional funding to maintain the activities of the Neo-Mamme ("new mothers") space.

Contact:

Organisation, Town, Country: Con.Opera Social Coop, Florence, Italy

Website: https://percorsiconibambini.it/bambinialcentro/scheda-progetto/

Contact person: Alfonso Dell'Orso, Project manager, email address:

bambinidallaperiferiaalcentro@conopera.it

AFLATOT - Slovakia

AFLATOT methodology helps children become socially and economically empowered and inspires them to become active agents in creating a more equitable world. It involves parents and educators in the use of innovative and child-centred teaching methods

Target groups:	Children aged 3-6, parents, teachers/ECEC practitioners/trainers
Focus:	Social and financial education - innovative teaching methods. This project combines high-quality educational materials with learning through play and active learning methods, helping children to develop proactive attitudes, practical skills, and values. It builds positive attitudes towards the environment and promotes respect for gender, religious and cultural diversity. It supports the role of parents and families.

Objectives: The Aflatot programme for toddlers/3-6-year-olds started in 2015 in Slovakia and is a part of a wider Aflatoun programme. Aflatoun International uses a social franchise model to connect and collaborate with organisations and governmental institutions all over the world. The mission of the programme is to ensure access to high quality, inclusive, child-centred social and financial education for all children and young people, especially the most vulnerable ones.

Methodology: The programme is intended for all children regardless of their educational needs. The methodology can be adapted to different environments and ages. The programme involves whole families through tasks that children work on with parents at home. It supports

parents' engagement in the education of children, strengthens communication, and helps create an emotional bond between them. This form of involvement increases the family's interest in cooperating with the ECEC facilities. It removes the barriers that exist between the child's home environment and the ECEC professionals and creates an alliance that is beneficial for the child. The programme promotes the use of child-centred methods. It is implemented in kindergartens, primary schools and community centres and has been recognised by the Slovak Ministry of Education as a positive innovation in the area of social and financial literacy, helping children grow up to be active citizens.

Strengths: Child-centred approaches drive the programme, nurturing children's interests through sharing ideas and initiating projects, and encouraging playful learning to promote creativity and problem-solving. The importance of relationships is recognised by emphasising interactions with peers, educators, and families to teach respect, empathy, and appreciation. It also prioritises family involvement, with the programme's integrated social and financial education influencing children's social and emotional development.

Impact: In 2019/20, 10 facilities implemented the Aflatot programme and approx. 700 children and parents took part in the activities. Similar figures are expected in 2020/21, while at the same time strengthening active work with the families. In 2020/21, Open Society Foundation is conducting a re-evaluation of the Aflatot programme on a sample of approximately 300 children.

The children are able to better express their emotions and manage their behaviour in a healthy way, cooperate and be more respectful. They learn to think and act independently, are more responsible and able to follow their dreams.

Contact:

Nadácia otvorenej spoločnosti Bratislava / Open Society Foundation / NOS-OSF, Bratislava, Slovak

Website: www.osf.sk, Contact person: Erika Szabóová - project manager, email: erika.szaboova@osf.sk

"MENEDEK" - Hungary

Hungarian association for migrants	
Target groups:	Migrant children
Focus:	Promoting social justice and third country nationals' integration

Objectives: Menedék – Hungarian Association for Migrants has been helping the social integration of immigrants arriving in and departing from Hungary, through a set of social, educational, and cultural programs built on more than 20 years of experience. Is particularly active in migrant children's integration.

Methodology: Menedék is particularly responsible for the successful integration of migrant children. Not only because they are the most vulnerable, but because the attitude towards them determines the kind of society we are heading to. They work with children in three different life situations: they help foreign children living in their country to find their place in school. At the refugee reception centres, they offer programs for the waiting families to somewhat structure their days and for the children to catch up with school curriculum. On weekdays the social workers hold school pre-integration and community programs for the unaccompanied minors at the children's home taking care of the children arriving without parents.

Impact: Menedek developed a complex system of services that has supported thousands of refugees and other foreigners in finding a new home in Hungary, a place in schools or returning to their home country.

Conclusion: When supporting immigrants and professionals, it is very important to help the majority society become more open and receptive to foreigners, as this is essential for the successful integration of migrants.

Contact:

Website: https://menedek.hu/en/activities/children, Phone: +36204507245

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS UP! - Serbia

Despite the large number of children and adolescents affected by these problems, there are few prevention programmes and the resources directed to preschool children are even fewer.	
Target group	Target groups are preschool teachers, children from ages 4 and 5 and their families, and it prioritises its implementations in multicultural contexts, where there are different family structures with a diversity of religious and political beliefs, different socioeconomic status, or geographical origins.
Focus	***Training for teachers, preventive programme***

Objectives: The main goal of CRUP! project is to develop an effective, realistic, and quality child sexual abuse prevention programme aimed at preschool classrooms, taking into consideration all the needs explained beforehand. To do this, the project has the following objectives:

1. Improve the acquisition of key competencies in boys and girls aged 4 and 5, emphasizing social competences.
2. Promote sexual education for boys and girls between 4 and 5 years old by promoting health.
3. Overcome the existing obstacles posted by families, professionals, and organisations in the development of child sexual abuse prevention programmes at an early age.
4. Offer the necessary tools so that teachers can prevent and tackle child sexual abuse situations in the class.
5. Offer tools to families for the prevention of child sexual abuse from a daily point of view through promoting health and well-being of the child.

Methodology: The project is implemented at international level. Material was developed and translated into the local language, training of future trainers has been conducted and then these trainers were supported to deliver local training for all staff. Meetings with parents were organised to introduce them to the topic and material. The main strengths are the importance of the topic recognised by both teachers and parents. Challenges and potential limitations are recognised in the area of open discussion about sexuality both among adults and between adults and children.

Impact:

1) Creation of a theoretical-practical framework on how to prevent child sexual abuse at an early age

from the school context and specifically in pre-school classes.

2) Improvement of key competences in boys and girls aged 4 and 5, with an emphasis on social competences, with the aim of improving the quality of life, well-being, and physical and psychological health of future adults. To this end, the developed addressed sexual abuse not only from the perspective of the victim but also addressing issues such as equality, respect, privacy, and consent, adapting these notions to the ages of the children.

3) Inclusion of sexual education content for boys and girls ages from 4 and 5 from a health perspective and also developed skills to prevent it.

4) Overcoming the existing obstacles for the development of prevention programmes of child sexual abuse at an early age. To this end, the design of the prevention program took into account the different religious, cultural, and social sensitivities, emphasizing the aspects of health, prevention, protection, and children's rights. The prevention programme includes topics such as sex education, key competences in a social level and the prevention of child sexual abuse under a wide diversity of religious and cultural realities. Specific materials developed for families and professionals to help understand the benefits of protection and prevention.

5) Necessary tools so teachers can prevent and address situations of child sexual abuse in the classroom. The prevention programme is designed so that early childhood education teachers can implement it autonomously. An online training to teach teachers that with the materials they are able to implement prevention and protection activities in the classroom in a coherent, safe, and effective way.

6) Tools aimed at families for the prevention of child sexual abuse from daily life through the promotion of the health and well-being of children.

Conclusion: Both teachers and family members understood the importance of talking about sexuality and naming properly private parts, the importance of open discussion and trust building. For the replication in other countries, only translation is needed if the language is different from those in which all the material has been developed.

Website: https://school-education.ec.europa.eu/en/insights/news/childrens-rights-strategies-prevent-child-sexual-abuse

https://childrensrightsup.eu

GENDERBEST - Serbia

Given the persisting gender inequalities and stereotyping, this initiative helps young children in the development of respect for gender equality and helps girls especially from the marginalised groups gain easier and better access to digital devices and their learning to use digital tools.

Target groups	ECEC professionals, Management, and educators
Focus	CVET/ CPD (Continuous professional development)/ staff training; psychological/mentoring/coaching support services, innovative tools, measures to improve the professional environment

Objectives: The focus is on improving monitoring and (self) evaluation of the ECEC institutions and professionals in terms of gender equality. The main goal is to support ECEC teachers, preschools' leaders, and other training providers to improve gender and gender related digital access equality in ECEC settings in all aspects that ensure inclusive quality ECEC as per EU Quality Framework Recommendations, whilst empowering them to monitor and (self) evaluate the gender mainstreaming in ECEC. The specific objectives are: 1. To improve ECEC professionals' and other supporting staff's competences to self-assess their own gender biased prejudice and discriminatory attitudes and practises; 2. To develop tools and guides for policies and practices reducing gender and gender related digital use gaps in the ECEC settings in 5 quality areas per EU Quality Framework Recommendations; 3. To create and strengthen learning community of teachers, parents, civil society and other stakeholders that can effectively monitor, (self) evaluate gender and gender related digital use and plan measures to reduce it.

Methodology: A self-assessment tool was developed for any teacher or parent to assess one's own (un)conscious bias, prejudice or stereotypes related to gender equality and equal social inclusion. A Manual for quality standards achievement in promoting gender equality in ECEC settings from the beginning was developed

taking into account EU Quality Framework and various national standards in different countries. A Best Practices Collection was also developed to provide ECEC Managements and professionals with ideas how to improve gender equality and actively develop respect for gender equality in children and in work with their parents. Training for trainers was organised and at a later stage local training sessions were held in different ECEC settings.

Impact: The awareness has been raised about different situations in which boys and girls are not treated equally, where personal unconscious bias in addition to traditional gender role model hinder gender equality in early years. Skills have been developed among ECEC professionals to consciously organise and deliver the activities and discussions with children and their families to promote social justice for all.

Conclusion: What are the key success factors, resources and requirements needed to replicate this service/ tool/ approach in other organisations at the national and international level?

The resources are made in English, Slovakian, Italian and Serbian languages, so they can be easily replicated. Self-assessment tools are made for autonomous use, tools for monitoring and evaluation of ECEC settings, their layout, choice and use of toys and digital resources is also based on the EU Quality Framework for ECEC and incorporates quality standards applicable internationally, whilst the best practice collection is a useful source of ideas and suggestions for any ECEC setting anywhere.

Website: https://www.genderbest.eu/

Contact person/ Email: info@pomocdeci.org

PROMOTING ACCESS THROUGH REMOVING TAXES - BULGARIA

Advocacy for municipality incentives for vulnerable families.

Target groups:	Children from vulnerable groups, Roma children
Focus:	Kindergarten fees and financial incentives for children and families in need

Objectives: Long-term ultimate goal: Sustainable strategy at the level of the EU OP and at national and municipal level to remove financial barriers to early education and care for children from vulnerable social groups in Bulgaria, with predominant attention paid to the Roma population. Specific objectives of the project:

- Increasing the funding from the national budget for the removal of financial barriers for early education by BGN 25 million per year by 2019, which creates an opportunity to eliminate the need for co-financing of early education for children aged between 2 and 6 years.

- Persuading 3 municipalities in Bulgaria with a significant Roma population to use their own resources for early education to remove the financial barrier by reducing the financial participation of parents by 25%.

- Building skills and knowledge in parents from poor communities to defend their priorities and needs in front of local authorities.

- Building skills and knowledge for advocacy in the members of the GI network for changes in social inclusion policies at national and municipal level.

Methodology: Implemented by the World Without Borders Association in its capacity as elected representative of the informal network "Ready for School" (GU) together with 17 other NGOs.

Impact: Thanks in part to the project's advocacy efforts, kindergarten fees were included in a new funding framework introduced by the "Science and Education for Smart Growth" operational programme. In October 2018, the programme 'Local Development, Poverty Reduction and Enhanced Involvement of Vulnerable Groups' was launched with an EEA

grant of BGN 16 million to facilitate comprehensive measures to improve access to education, health, and social services for Roma children. This initiative includes kindergarten fees as a qualified expense under its provisions.

Challenges for the realisation:

- - There is a shortage of kindergarten places in major urban centres.
- - The Ministry of Finance has not yet provided explicit and official support for the abolition of fees, either for all children or specifically for those aged 5-6.
- - Informal sources suggest that the forthcoming funding process under the Science and Education for Smart Growth Operational Programme may prioritise children who are not associated with a kindergarten or municipality. It is feared that this approach will potentially exclude children from smaller communities and those facing economic hardship from benefiting from the programme.

World Without Borders, Stara Zagora, Bulgaria,

Website: https://www.sviatbezgranici.org/

Contact person: Gancho Iliev, Chairman of the Board - veselrom@abv.bg

KINDERDAM - BUILDING A DEMOCRATIC COMMUNITY – The Netherlands

It is not great deeds that allow us to live in a democracy - small, "ordinary" things ensure that a democratic society can thrive.

Target groups:	Children (0-12 years) and their families; childcare educators, pedagogical coaches, managers, parents, external parties (schools, expertise centres, etc.).
Focus:	This **innovative intervention**, initiated by KindeRdam management and staff, focuses on creating democratic and inclusive childcare in five steps: 1. Making an inventory of what is needed in the daily practice for children and professionals to feel and perform better; 2. Conducting practical in-house research of the practice with support from different academic institutions and other experts; 3. Making an inventory of already available materials; 4. Collaboration with external expert parties; 5. Develop materials for educators, other professionals and parents.

Objectives: This intervention aims at building a community where people feel connected to each other regardless of their background, culture, colour or religion; to encourage young children to practice democratic values (responsibility, caring for themselves and others, and using dialogue to find solutions); motivating children to get to know each other, to be curious about each other and to learn to deal with differences; and to make parents feel welcome and involved in their child's day-care.

Methodology/Starting points: Intervention is based on beliefs where childcare is a place where children meet, attention to their needs and talents is paid, and that positive interactions give children more self-confidence and contribute to community building. When dealing with problems that require continued effort, it is good to start as a project in line with the policy of the municipality. Key feature of the intervention is a strength-based approach echoed in reflections on the daily practices by asking selected managers the following questions: What are good practices that already exist? What seems to be the areas for improvement concerning democratic behaviour of children and educators? Another important success factor is conducting research on this topic and collaborating with academia and experts. KindeRdam is participating in research on diversity in childcare with Elly Singer and Anke van Keulen. Childcare educators research their practice, discuss the outcomes in teams and make adjustments. The greatest challenge is to persevere and understand that building a democratic community requires trial and error, and time.

Impact: KindeRdam evaluates pedagogical quality by using the 'Pedagogische praktijk in Beeld (PiB)', developed by KindeRdam and the Dutch Youth Institute based on a validated instrument used by the inspection of childcare in the Netherlands. The main outcome so far is the awareness among childcare educators, professionals, and parents of the importance of a more democratic community and involving children, and how even small adjustments in practice can lead to more connectedness and justice.

Conclusion: Although only halfway through the project, the benefits of discussions on democratic interactions and environment are visible. Their advice is: when introducing change, start from what is already there (strength-based approach), take a proactive approach (action research) and involve all actors, including children, in a dialogue.

Contact: KindeRdam childcare organisation, Rotterdam, The Netherlands/ Simon Hay, pedagogue, email: s.hay@kinderdam.nl, Website: www.kinderdam.nl