EQstudents
Emotional Intelligence
The mind that feels

Model of Working with a Pupil Aged 6-10 for Development of Emotional Intelligence

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INTRODUCTION

The *EQ Kids model* defines processes, tools and rules of working with pupils aged 6-10, especially those with adaptive difficulties, for the development of emotional intelligence in the educational environment and at home, involving teachers, tutors, school pedagogues, psychologists, counsellors and parents. It is a *precursor of the EQ Teens model*, which deals with pupils aged 11-15 years, so if you're interested in processes, tools and rules to work with that age group, please check that model too.

The EQ Kids model focuses on the stage of the first school cycle, which is quite a challenge in a child's life, while also offering generous opportunities for developing the emotional intelligence and handling issues connected with school adaptation, making and maintaining friends, gaining autonomy. The period in which the child starts attending school is characterized by an intense physiological and psychological growth, leading to increased motor skills, development of concrete reasoning, enhanced memory and language, but also deeper introspective and empathetic capacities. All these changes, overlapping the new demands of the formal learning environment and the new social rules they need to abide by, create a lot of tension for the young pupils, while they are not really emotionally equipped to deal with without adult support. In this context, both parents and teachers need to be adequately prepared to assist pupils, by focusing on the development of their emotional intelligence.

The goal of the model is to present the *comprehensive scheme how to work with pupils and how to support them in developing their emotional intelligence*. The model is addressed to school personnel, namely teachers, tutors, school pedagogues, counsellors, psychologists, socio-therapists and other experts working with pupils aged 6-10 experiencing difficulties and with their parents or other family members.

The emotional state of a pupil influences the way he/ she acquires knowledge and the success in school depends largely on the emotional traits. Thus, the EQ Kids model will cover *four key components of emotional intelligence*, in order to promote well-being of pupils, to boost their ability to adapt to the school environment and to ensure successful interpersonal relationships and educational success. These four key components are *coloured coded* with the same colours throughout the entire model: *self-awareness* - red, *self-management* - green, *social awareness* - yellow and *relationship management* - blue.

The model contains two parts:

- *part 1* - dedicated to *theoretical information* - about the dimensions of emotional intelligence, about the impact of the systematic training guided by teachers, parents and other professionals upon the development of emotional intelligence and also about the systemic perspective upon behavioural and disadaptive problems - and
- *part 2* - dedicated to *practical information* - describing specific techniques, exercises, worksheets, guidelines, organized by key components (follow the colour codes to search for a certain one), for managing the development of emotional intelligence, which are to be implemented directly with the children (one to one or in a group) or with the parents.

Part 1 is addressed to both teachers and specialists involved in the education process of the pupils, while part 2 is divided into chapters focusing on different target groups, as follows:

- one chapter with *short activities, which teachers may implement in their everyday lessons*, no matter what subjects they teach;
- one chapter containing a *complete program for developing the emotional intelligence of kids in 50 minutes one-to-one sessions*, meant to be delivered by trained school specialists (psychologist, school counsellor, school pedagogue, social worker, tutor, support teacher, psychotherapist/ socio-therapist etc.); the program is composed of 18 sessions (1 introductive, 4 for each key component and 1 final);
- one chapter containing a *complete program for developing the emotional intelligence of kids in 45-50 minutes group/ class lessons*, meant to be delivered either by trained school specialists

(psychologist, school counsellor, school pedagogue, social worker, tutor, support teacher, psychotherapist/ socio-therapist etc.) or by experienced teachers/ youth educators who are already familiar with emotional intelligence development mechanisms; the program is composed of 18 lessons (1 introductive, 4 for each key component and 1 final); the length of the group session is approximated in accordance with the length of the usual lesson in partner countries of the project, but it may require extra time, according to the specific situation and size of each work group;

- one chapter containing a ***complete program for supporting parents in developing the emotional intelligence of their children***; the program is composed of 5 workshops (1 introductive and 1 for each key component) having a duration of approximately 90 minutes and it is recommended to be delivered either by a trained school specialist (psychologist, school counsellor, school pedagogue, social worker, tutor, support teacher, psychotherapist/ socio-therapist etc.) or by experienced teachers/ trainers/ adult educators who are already familiar with emotional intelligence development mechanisms;
- one chapter providing a ***collection of best practices from different countries and continents***, which are ***meant to inspire both professionals working in the field of children's education and stakeholders involved in managing the education process*** (such as school headmasters, education inspectors, education curricula and policy makers etc.).

The model is structured as follows:

- **Part 1. Emotional intelligence and the educational environment**
    - **Chapter 1. The first school cycle - a great challenge in the child's life**
    - **Chapter 2. Description of the emotional intelligence and its components**
    - **Chapter 3. The development of the emotional intelligence and its importance**
    - **Chapter 4. The role of teachers in the development of emotional intelligence**
    - **Chapter 5. The systemic perspective upon behavioural and disadaptive problems**
- **Part 2. Practical guidelines for developing the emotional intelligence within the school environment**
    - **Chapter 6. Guidelines for teachers**
    - **Chapter 7. Guidelines for specialists for individual work**
    - **Chapter 8. Guidelines for specialists for group work**
    - **Chapter 9. Parent support**
    - **Chapter 10. Cross-cultural best practices**
- **Glossary**
- **References**

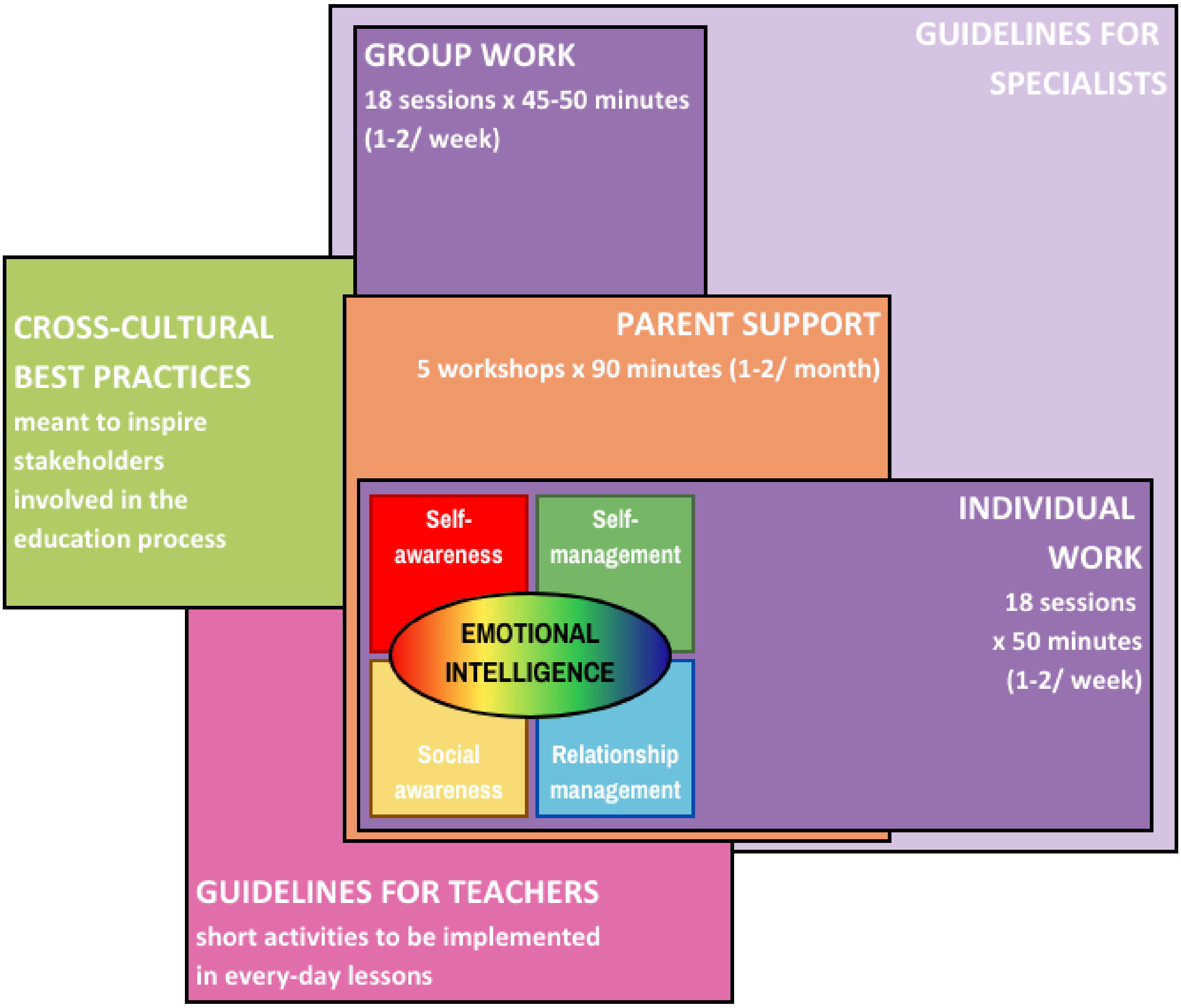
The implementation of the EQ Kids is targeted towards ***primary school students*** (aged 6-10), ***school personnel*** (teachers, tutors, counsellors, psychologists, pedagogues, psychotherapists etc. working to support the educational process) and ***parents***. The application of the model will allow the pupils: to function more effectively in the education process, to adapt better to school requirements, to overcome peer relationships difficulties and to benefit from a positive impact on their own self-esteem and self-efficacy. In regard to the professionals, the implementation of this model will help teachers, psychologists and other experts to support pupils with special educational needs to fulfil the educational goals and to develop their potential in a mutually inclusive environment, free from bullying and discrimination. Last, but not least, the model is also useful for supporting the pupils with no obvious difficulties in tackling the personal development needs and cultivating better emotional grounding and better social relationships.

The EQ Kids model is an innovative one, because it offers a broad understanding and a comprehensive approach of the 4-component emotional intelligence model and its applicability, not being limited to the recognition and coping with emotions, which is already present in the core curriculum, and is focused on handling the development of emotional intelligence, as a key predictor of success, from school level. Also, a strong point of this model is the fact that it involves teachers and parents in developing the emotional intelligence of pupils, not leaving it entirely up to specialists to do that. Still, ***cooperation between teachers, parents and specialists is recommended***, because they may coordinate the activities and have a more efficient impact on the child's development. Also, if teachers or parents find themselves in situations in which they are overwhelmed or unprepared for, they are strongly recommended to ask for the support of a psychologist or counsellor.

Even though the guidelines for each category of professionals may be regarded as complete programs (see the diagram on page 10 for the recommended frequency and estimated duration of each), their key value will be their ***circularity*** and the fact that teachers and specialists are not restricted to follow the lessons/ sessions from beginning to end, but they may choose where to start and where to finish, according to the needs of the pupils they work with.

Furthermore, one of the most important features of the EQ Kids model will be its ***replicability***, thus ensuring future usability in different school systems, communities and countries.

Moreover, all the activities found in the model may be ***complemented with*** activities from ***EQ Teens*** model, with which EQ Kids shares the same structure, with the emotional intelligence assessment tool (***EQ Teens Test***) and the hybrid game for the development of the emotional intelligence (***EQ Game***).



GUIDELINES FOR SPECIALISTS

GROUP WORK
18 sessions x 45-50 minutes (1-2/ week)

CROSS-CULTURAL BEST PRACTICES
meant to inspire stakeholders involved in the education process

PARENT SUPPORT
5 workshops x 90 minutes (1-2/ month)

INDIVIDUAL WORK
18 sessions x 50 minutes (1-2/ week)

Self-awareness
Self-management
EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE
Social awareness
Relationship management

GUIDELINES FOR TEACHERS
short activities to be implemented in every-day lessons

PART 1. EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND THE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

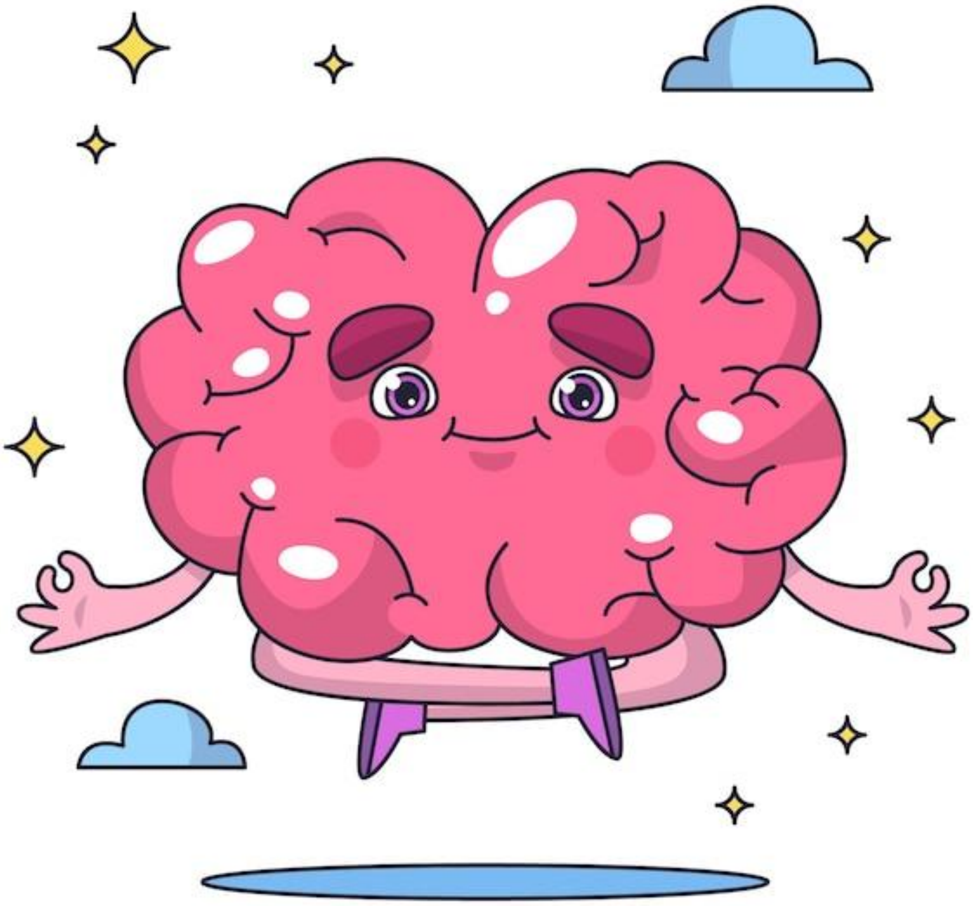
Chapter 1. The first school cycle – a great challenge in the child's life

Chapter 2. Description of emotional intelligence and its components

Chapter 3. The development of emotional intelligence and its importance

Chapter 4. The role of teachers in the development of emotional intelligence

Chapter 5. The systemic perspective upon behavioural and disadaptive problems



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The first school cycle – a great challenge in the child's life

When the child reaches the age of schooling, at around 6 years old, the predominant activity of the pre-school stage, play, gradually begins to be replaced by learning activity and, as a result, in the following years the child undergoes a series of transformations, both anatomical-physiological and psychological that will lead to a huge autonomy leap towards the age of 10 years old.

1.1. Child growth and development throughout the first school cycle

From physical point of view, during this stage the child increases in height with approximately 20 cm and in weight with around 10 kg (Munteanu, 1998). The muscular system is developing faster, triggering a growth in terms of force, precision and speed of the body movement. During this stage the "milk teeth" are replaced gradually by the permanent ones - this fact may draw with itself some periods in which oral language is affected.

On psychological level, mechanical, involuntary and short-term *memory* is predominant at an early school age. Once at school, the child remembers what has made the greatest impression on him or her, which is why memory at this age is highly affective. The process of retaining knowledge is conditioned by the perception of objects and phenomena, so the use of all kinds of teaching materials during lessons is absolutely necessary. The child easily retains even the smallest and most insignificant details, with only 2-3 exposures of the stimulus being sufficient to retain it in memory.

Entering school accelerates the child's process of polishing the *language* by eliminating dialectal elements, slang or poor pronunciation. So the young schoolchild now has access to cultured language in an organised way. The linguistic potential of the schoolchild at the beginning of first grade differs greatly from one individual to another, depending on the education received in the family or the temperament formula. During the primary school period, the child's vocabulary doubles, reaching at the end of the stage about 4000-4500 words, of which a pool of about 1500-1600 units form the pupil's active vocabulary, thus by the end of the early school age, the child is already using the main word pool of the mother tongue. Progress is also evident in oral and written verbal fluency as the pupil approaches the end of this school cycle, around 10-11 years old. The language reaches also a higher quality, more refined and nuanced, while the pronunciation and correctness of the language are heightened by the systematic learning of vocabulary and grammar rules.

It is also the stage in which the basic writing and reading skills are learnt, which takes up quite some effort during the first 2-3 years of the stage. But vocabulary and pronunciation and also fine motor skills benefit from this and get enhanced as well.

The evolution of *thinking* at this age makes it possible to abandon the animistic and naive realist conception of the world in favour of a realist-naturalist conception. Concrete operational thinking now takes hold, facilitating the transition from intuitive, direct knowledge of reality to logical knowledge, based on notions and their relationships. The young schoolchild's thinking acquires an operant character, which means that the individual is now able to manipulate objects and phenomena mentally, while preserving their permanence, without deforming them. Abstract ideas continue to cause difficulties however, because the method used by the child at the age of early schooling is not very rigorous, as he or she uses mainly approximations or successive eliminations. Thus, thinking operations at this age have a concrete character, as the child cannot reason using only verbal sentences, but needs instead to have access to manipulating the objects, to interact with them or at least with their surrogates - images, sounds, etc.

Intellectual potential makes notable progress, being two or even three times greater at the end of this period than at the beginning. The emergence of the operant character of thought takes both non-specific and specific forms. As the child gets older, he or she increasingly turns to algorithms - a set of rules and instructions for solving a range of problems in different areas. The thinking of the young schoolchild makes use of notions, judgements and reasoning, and the whole register of reasoning gets diversified by reading and by studying sciences. Thus, at this age, notions of number, space, time, causality, necessity, quantity etc. appear. The skills acquired in the area of logical reasoning lead to progress in reversibility. A personal style of thinking is already emerging.

The new intellectual skills acquired during this period fuel a lively intellectual curiosity. The need to know as much as possible about the world around them is evident from the fact that, at this age, children ask many questions, showing an interest in everything that is going on around them, as well as in events, objects or phenomena that are distant - in space or time - from their world. This curiosity needs to be directed and stimulated, in order to lead to a well-built system of notions and general knowledge.

Although children are able to state their correct age at a very early age, on the basis of information provided by their parents, it has been shown that the concept of age is not really understood until the age of 7-10 (Zazzo).

Early school age also provides fertile ground for the development of ***imagination***, which will give the child the opportunity to master any time and space. Creative imagination is often practiced in activities like play, drawing, storytelling etc. and it is enhanced by the acquisition of multiple scientific notions and by understanding facts at more profound levels. A new development point is reached when the child is able to make use of the reproductive imagination, which enables him/ her to understand more deeply historical time and the relationships between different events or phenomena. With the help of the reproductive imagination, the young schoolchild can travel back in time, reconstruct facts and events that took place in other times. Incursions of this kind are also often populated with fantastic, fabulous elements, taken from stories and shaped in the spirit of their own fantasies, which evoke not only the fragility of their life experience, but also their remarkable capacity to escape from reality. By the age of 10, thanks to the pool of knowledge acquired, the child is able to order data chronologically and to know and retell historical events in the order in which they took place.

For an optimal development of the imagination process, the child needs appropriate challenges and stimulation through semi-structured tasks and activities, through freedom of decision and through access to a wide range of information.

The child is more attentive to details and the capacity of remaining focused in one activity increases significantly compared with the previous years. Still, children are easily distracted at this age by the richness of the stimuli in their surroundings. Their ***voluntary attention*** is also linked to the level of motivation they have towards a certain activity or type of information, which leads them to be able to stay focused for hours in certain activities, while being absent-minded during others and thus forgetting the simplest of things - like what is their homework or if they have brushed their teeth.

Entering school also changes the child's ***emotional universe***. Their emotional life becomes more balanced. New demands - related to school - diversify the emotional register of the young schoolchild, which is why at this age a sense of duty takes shape. Its development requires, on one hand, direct and tactful adult guidance and, on the other hand, a balanced work schedule. Early schooling also provides fertile ground for the development of moral, intellectual and aesthetic feelings - which must be carefully cultivated both at home and at school.

The strong desire of the school-age child to prove that he is no longer small is often expressed by imitating the behaviour of adults, who will act as role models of social conduct. The children in this life stage are very fine observers of the contradictions between the adults' behaviours and the verbal instructions they preach, thus a high consistency between the two is really important and recommended.

Often at this age, the child resorts to acts of courage - like pretending he/ she didn't feel pain if falling by accident or like entering a dark room to demonstrate he/ she is not afraid - to prove himself/ herself. This may also lead to taking unnecessary risks and getting hurt, so adult supervision and guidance is still very important. The autonomy skills are enhanced and the child is able to take more and more responsibility for himself/ herself - demonstrated by the ability to remain alone at home, to fulfil certain administrative tasks like washing dishes or watering the plants or to be comfortable with going on camps without the company of their parents.

The expression of emotional reactions also changes and the child becomes more censored and discreet during this period. He seems more restrained, more meditative, while regaining the wide range of facial expressions towards the age of 10. Will becomes more powerful during this stage, thus the conscious and voluntary nature of intellectual and emotional behaviour leads to increased performance in activity in general and in school work in particular.

1.2. Appropriate guidance for the child during the first years of school

As mentioned before, going to school comes with new challenges for the child, because if the main activity in the previous period was play, now that needs to change and the main activity for the pupil is studying. This change might require a lot of effort from the child's part and it takes time - usually a year or more - until the child manages to adapt to the new type of effort that needs to be put in. The adaptation process during the first years of schooling is of crucial importance for the whole time which the pupil will spend in school, as it sets the tone for the way he/ she works, learns, takes responsibilities, handles failures or successes etc.

The child should not be alone in this process. The adults in the family and the teachers at school play a huge part in the adaptation process to the new tasks and requirements. Their support and guidance may be decisive in many aspects concerning the children's behaviour during their first school cycle.

The proper support and guidance **at home** includes:

- ***setting up a comfortable and well lit workspace***, where the young pupil will do homework and will be able to practice writing in a healthy position - having a dedicated space for school work will help the child associate learning effort with that space and, thus, be able to get in a "learning mood" easier and take responsibility for the work while being in that space;
- ***setting in place a structured, but not rigid schedule***, which allows children to learn, but also to rest and properly get nourished to back up their intellectual and emotional effort - children need structure, as they are not able to take confident decisions regarding their strategies to achieve goals, so the adults should help them put in practice a daily schedule in order for children to be able to monitor what has been done and what is still required of them: enough passive rest (sleeping) time should be accounted for; active rest (play, sports, other hobbies) should also be included, as they are important for the child's well-being; healthy and sufficient meals need to be provided, as the amount of intellectual and emotional effort that the child puts in on a regular basis while adapting to school requirements is tremendous and draining (insufficient or inappropriate nourishment during this period leads to stagnations in growth, attention deficit, immunity problems and decline of the overall well-being);
- ***stimulating the child's interest for reading and knowledge***, especially through personal examples - when parents or other grown-ups in the family are able to demonstrate a passion for reading and for gathering knowledge, the children will

imitate the model in a high degree and will be able to easily develop these skills;

☺ ***celebrating the child's successes*** - the school effort is not easy and maintain motivation for it may only be done through acknowledging the strong points and successes of the child;

☺ ***encouraging the child's passions*** - sometimes parents have a fixed perspective regarding the development needs of the child and that doesn't always suit the real needs, thus, it is very important for the adults in the family to observe the children's interests and provide them with opportunities to further explore those areas;

☺ ***setting the base for a strong moral education*** - at school children interact with a wide range of other persons, which may behave according to different sets of rules and moral codes, so rather than trying to control what persons does the schoolchild interact with (which is quite impossible), it is better to prepare him/ her for different sorts of situations and for being able to protect himself/ herself from being used or harmed in any way;

☺ ***accepting the child for what he/ she is*** - all parents wish only the best for their children and often that comes along with a set of expectations regarding what their abilities and competences should be, but sometimes the children's potential might be in a different direction or the road to perfecting certain skills might be a sinuous one, scattered with failures and mistakes, so the love of the parents throughout this bumpy road should always be constant and unconditional no matter if the goals are achieved or not or if they are reached in a different timeframe compared to others.

The appropriate support and guidance **at school** refers to:

✍ ***voiding any prejudice and judgemental perspective from the teachers' attitude towards the pupils*** - no matter how the pupils present themselves at school, no matter what are the characteristics of their families or of the environments they come from, teachers must stick to their roles of mentors and educators and do their best to inoculate knowledge and ethics, keeping also in mind that pupils are not alike even though often school requires uniformity;

✍ ***being mindful of the fact that***, just like in the family, ***the teachers are role models*** for the youngsters, so ***they should mind their behaviour and language, their practice and their way of relating to others*** - one will not win over a child by scolding or by criticizing, by raising the voice or by preaching a behaviour one is not willing to implement oneself;

✍ ***validating the strong points and achievements of the pupils***, even though they have not reached a standard level - often school curricula provides standardized learning objectives and levels of performance, which are suitable for most pupils within a certain age range, but teachers should also be aware of the differences among pupils and their individualities and make the pupils which not measure up to those standards feel encouraged and included;

✍ ***trusting the pupil's potential*** - the child does not have the necessary abilities and competences to empower himself/ herself, so he/ she needs a grown-up to believe in his/ her potential and lead the way towards growth and development; teachers are powerful reference persons in a child's life, so their confidence in the child's abilities could make a huge difference;

✍ ***setting intermediary achievable goals*** in order to guide the school performance and stimulate the child's formative development - breaking the learning process into small tasks and the learning material into smaller units contributes to maintaining the motivation of the child and to make knowledge more "digestible".

Teachers and parents can and should work together for guiding the children through the challenges that this life stage comes with. Home education and school education are not in competition with one another, they are different aspects of the same goal: the good of the child. Thus, both teachers and parents should acknowledge the individuality of the pupils and cooperate in order to help them reach their full potential.

Description of emotional intelligence and its components

Emotional intelligence is a wide spoken concept nowadays and the attention it gets from both scientists and the general public proves its great importance in reaching the human potential. Moreover, by accepting that emotional intelligence is a general ability - as opposed to innate talents - activities and strategies for developing it have emerged in the past decades in the scientific literature.

2.1. Emotional intelligence as a scientific concept – literature review

Emotional intelligence can be defined in a variety of ways, and there are numerous definitions online. Several of these concepts are based on popularizations of emotional intelligence that may be found in popular books and the media. But since it takes the concepts of emotion and intellect seriously, a precise and scientifically valuable definition of emotional intelligence may be identified. In other words, the definition of emotional intelligence specifically refers to the intelligent interaction of concepts and emotions. For instance: The ability to use emotions to support thought and to rationally reason with them is known as emotional intelligence (Mayer, n.d.).

The term "emotional intelligence" was first used by Salovey and Mayer in 1990 and they were aware of earlier research on non-cognitive aspects of intelligence. According to their definition, emotional intelligence is "a sort of social intelligence that entails the ability to monitor one's own and others' moods and emotions, to discriminate between them, and to utilize this information to inform one's thinking and action." (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Moreover, Salovey and Mayer started a study to create reliable emotional intelligence tests and investigate its relevance. For instance, they discovered in one study that viewers who scored well on emotional clarity–the capacity to recognize and categorize an experienced mood–recovered more quickly after watching an unpleasant movie Salovey et al. (1995). According to a different study, people who scored higher on the capacity to effectively sense, comprehend, and judge others' emotions were better able to adapt to changes in their social settings and form supportive social networks (Salovey, n.d.). The outcomes showed that one was able to spread his emotion throughout the group, and that positive emotions enhanced cooperation, fairness, and overall group performance. In fact, quantifiable measurements showed that the happy groups were more adept at allocating the funds fairly and in a way that benefited the business.

Researchers have long recognized that emotional intelligence, and empathy in particular, play a role in professional success. More than 20 years ago, Rosenthal and his Harvard colleagues found that persons who were good at recognizing others' emotions were more successful in both their professional and social lives (Rosenthal, 1979).

Goleman has made an effort to illustrate this concept by differentiating between emotional competence and emotional intelligence. The personal and social abilities that result in greater performance in the workplace are referred to as emotional competence. Emotional intelligence is a foundation for and a relationship between the emotional competencies. Learning the emotional skills requires a certain amount of emotional intelligence, according to the Consortium for Research on Emotional Intelligence in Organizations (Goleman, 1996). A perfect example of this, is that one can build a certain talent like Influence by being able to precisely identify what another person is feeling. Similar to this, those who are more adept at controlling their emotions will have an easier time growing a competency like initiative or achievement drive. In the end, if we want to be able to anticipate performance, we need to be able to identify and assess these social and emotional competencies (Goleman, 1996).

According to Goleman, emotional intelligence is a perspective that goes beyond the cognitive qualities of intelligence (like memory and problem-solving). We are mostly talking about our ability to successfully communicate with others and with ourselves, to connect with our emotions and manage them, to be self-driven, to control our impulses, and to get over our disappointments. Goleman explains that his theory of emotional intelligence has four fundamental dimensions: The first is awareness of oneself (self-awareness) and it alludes to our capacity to comprehend how we feel, to be in touch with our core principles. The second dimension is self-motivation, which refers to our capacity to focus on our objectives, bounce back from failures, and control stress. The third relates to social consciousness (social awareness). It has to do with our capacity to relate to, communicate with, come to agreements with, and establish positive, respectful connections with people which is unquestionably the fourth link and the philosopher's stone of emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1996).

Being emotionally intelligent generally entails realizing that feelings are an integral component of who we are and how we live. Being talented emotionally it can make us more flexible, adaptive, and emotionally mature. (Konsep Dan Makna Pembelajaran : Untuk Membantu Memecahkan Problematika Belajar Dan Mengajar / Oleh, H. Syaiful Sagala | OPAC Perpustakaan Nasional RI., n.d.) mentioned that one of the characteristics that teachers need to be aware of in order to assist students with learning issues is intelligence so as to raise student performance. Emotional intelligence skills to work in synergy with cognitive skills, people who are high achievers have both. Uncontrolled emotions can make people good at being stupid. Without emotional intelligence, people will not be able to use their cognitive abilities according to its maximum potential.

One study determines how emotional intelligence–which includes self-awareness, self-management, motivation, social awareness, and relationship management–influences student accomplishment in part and simultaneously. It concluded that the purpose of The Impact of Emotional Intelligence Against Academic Success is to identify how emotional intelligence–which includes self-awareness, self-management, motivation, social awareness, and relationship management–affects academic achievement. 135 pupils from SMP Negeri 4 Lalan Great Earth Village in Banyuasin Regency served as the respondents. Strategies for data analysis using regression analysis, preliminary assay outcomes (t-test) Self-awareness, self-control, motivation, social awareness, relationship management, and a significant favourable impact on academic accomplishment are all examples of emotional intelligence that has been demonstrated. Emotional intelligence includes self-awareness, self-management, motivation, social awareness, relationship management, and has a strong favourable impact on academic accomplishment, according to the results of the Simultaneous Test (Test-F). Social awareness has a stronger impact on academic success (*GUIDENA: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan, Psikologi, Bimbingan Dan Konseling*, n.d.).

2.2. The components of emotional intelligence

The most basic definition of emotional intelligence is the capacity to identify and control our own emotions as well as those of others. This definition's four key EI domains are the following:

- **self-awareness** - defined as the capacity of a person to recognize and name his/ her own emotions at any given time by being aware of own thoughts and body cues;
- **self-management** - defined as the capacity of a person to manage the expression of emotions, meaning the behaviours and reactions which are triggered by his/ her emotions, according to the situation they are in;
- **social awareness** - defined as the capacity of a person to identify and name the emotions of other people by the verbal (words), non-verbal (mimics, gestures, posture, behaviours) and para-verbal (characteristics of the voice: tone, volume, inflexions etc.) cues;
- **relationship management** - defined as the capacity of a person to choose a reaction

best suited to the situation they are in and produce the anticipated effects upon other persons, thus influencing the others' feelings, thoughts, behaviours.

self-
social awareness
self-management
relationship management

Fig. 1. The four components of emotional intelligence are like four differently flavoured slices of the same cake

All of the primary EI theory variations refer to these four domains, though they are known by different names. For instance, the domains of social awareness and relationship management go under what Gardner (1983) defines as interpersonal intelligence, whereas the areas of self-awareness and self-management belong under what Gardner (1983) calls intrapersonal intelligence. Some distinguish between emotional intelligence (EI) and social intelligence (SI), viewing EI as a person's capacity for personal self-management like impulse control and SI as interpersonal competency. The phrase social and emotional learning, or SEL, is used generally to refer to the movement in education that aims to develop curriculum that teach EI abilities.

This domain is known as the Self-awareness stage, according to Goleman (1995), where one is able to identify a feeling as it arises. This idea is regarded as the cornerstone of emotional intelligence. The capacity to recognize and keep track of one's genuine emotions improves self-awareness and one's capacity to keep an eye on and manage one's life. This idea enables an individual to consciously choose both important and unimportant life decisions.

According to (Shapiro, 2010) a child's capacity for verbalizing emotions is a crucial aspect of satisfying basic wants. Gaining emotional control and effective communication both depend on the ability to recognize and express one's emotions. This idea is particularly helpful in creating connections that are loving and satisfying. An awakening of the self is the first step in the idea of understanding oneself. An individual gains the capacity to reflect inwardly on one's thoughts, feelings, and behaviour as a result. It is comparable to psychoanalysis when someone employs self-reflection to develop a more accurate picture of who they are. One develops emotional competence of the self by fine-tuning the level of understanding of one's sentiments where conscious and unconscious thought are susceptible to a level of research Goleman (1995). Here is an example of knowing one's emotions: Anna's parents gave her the chance to experience her first concert as a birthday present. Anna finds out two days prior to the performance that the band had to postpone the show due to a member's illness. Anna expresses her displeasure in words and anticipates to the rescheduled event.

The impulses that are sent to the brain directly correlate with the cause and effect of emotions. According to Howard (2006), situations that have the potential to cause emotional reactions must first pass through the mind's and brain's appraisal process. This activity is thought to be a fast response that happens in the interval between the stimulus and the response. As a result, the brain regulates how and when emotions are triggered. A certain feeling is transmitted through the stimuli's impact. Because of this link, a person can control the intensity and duration of a certain feeling. Here's an indication of how to control your emotions: Ted is stuck in traffic on his way home from work because a semi-tractor trailer that has overturned is blocking all lanes of the highway. Ted is troubled by his current circumstance, but he chooses to vent his anger by practicing deep breathing and listening to calming music Gardner (1983).

It's critical to consider other people's feelings and needs as one continues to develop a high level of self-awareness. One's social skills, empathic perspective, and social competence are all moulded by this sensitivity. According to Gardner (1983), the fundamental trait of interpersonal intelligence is "the ability to recognize and make distinctions among other individuals" in terms of mood, temperament, and motivations. He compares the basic form of interpersonal intelligence to a child's ability to distinguish between and recognize other people's moods. Here is an example of how to identify emotions in others: On the playground, Margaret was playing a game of soccer when she tripped and scraped her knee. Apart for Justin, who watched Margaret from the other side of the playing field, no one else intervened to assist Margaret as the game went on. Justin congratulated Margaret on her try to score a goal as he helped her to her feet and led her to the nurse to get her knee inspected.

The degree to which one builds and maintains relationships is a reflection of how self-aware and socially skilled one is. As a result, developing relationships is seen as a process. We must recognize some demands that are inherent in the process of forming relationships, such as creating, sustaining, and upholding affiliations with varied levels of intimacy. Given the complexity of emotions and how they affect interactions with others, this process may be rather challenging. The likelihood of forming effective relationships improves with exposure to social circumstances (Gardner, 1983). We obtain a sense of equilibrium in our exchange of emotional expressions and social competency by partaking in activities that broaden our viewpoint and improve our socialization abilities. Moreover, relationships can be seen as a state of reciprocity where the giving and receiving of emotions and interactions is a respectful and mutual exchange. According to Hendrick & Hendrick, humans have a wide range of feelings for other individuals. The degree to which we like or detest somebody might sum up such encounters. The idea of interpersonal attraction, or just attraction, can be used to define like and disliking. Understanding relationships requires taking into account topics like interaction and affiliation as essential elements of the person's experiences and associations (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1992). Here's an example of managing relationships: Judy was made team captain of her football team after five months as the team captain of her school's football team. Some of her teammates think highly of her as an intellectual, creative, and imaginative person. Judy is aware that certain members of her football team disagree with this appointment and have decided not to support the coach's decision. In order to win the confidence, collaboration, and respect of her teammates and give them the chance to express their ideas for the future of the school's football team, Judy has chosen to implement a monthly brown bag lunch series.

Goleman makes the case that emotional intelligence (EI) is a phenomenon distinct from IQ in The Brain and Emotional Intelligence: New Insights by citing studies to back up his claim (IQ). For instance, Goleman outlines a number of traits that contribute to EI, which are fundamentally different from a person's IQ. Creativity, desire, perseverance, motivation, rapport, and empathy are a few of these traits. He cites a number of published research findings that "inform us there are brain regions that govern EI, which distinguishes this collection of human talents from academics (verbal, math, and spatial) intelligence, or IQ," in which he claims that there are brain centres that govern EI (Goleman, 2012).

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Emotional intelligence – a catalyst for overall development

The main goal of the 6-10 years old stage in the length of human existence is for the child to prove oneself that he/ she is able to make it in the world of people (Erikson). At this age, they become more and more competent in using logical reasoning, understanding scientific facts and other matters that are typically taught in school. Also, they become more competitive and they want to do things that other children of the same age can do. When they make the effort to perform a task and succeed, they develop self-confidence. However, if they fail, they tend to feel that they are inferior to others. Here is where the emotional intelligence may prove itself useful, as being emotionally competent may in fact make the difference between self-confident children and the ones that feel incompetent.

3.1. The importance of emotional intelligence for kids

Children in primary school with a high degree of emotional intelligence are:

- ➢ able to use a more elaborate vocabulary when speaking about what they are going through;
- ➢ distinguishing the diversity and complexity of emotional expressions and understanding the causality of different emotions;
- ➢ adapting faster to the new sets of rules and tasks at school;
- ➢ more autonomous, because they are relying on their own skills and competences to succeed;
- ➢ dealing with mistakes and failures in a healthy way, that helps them learn from them and grow;
- ➢ prone to initiate and cultivate functional relationships with their peers.

Most of the times, the difficulties with which a child is confronted during the first school years, including most of the situations in which there appears to be a delayed development of the cognitive abilities, are of emotional nature:

- ⦿ they might feel overwhelmed by the tasks and have no idea how to ask for help,
- ⦿ they might feel shy on social level, so they get left out by the group or even laughed at,
- ⦿ they might have a deeper curiosity for the surrounding environment and not knowing how to deal with it might make them seem distracted and inattentive, while they miss on the more formal lessons and tasks,
- ⦿ they might get blocked by their fear of making mistakes and not take action or they might react in an exaggerate way when making the smallest mistake;
- ⦿ they might withdraw and feel misunderstood because they cannot express what they feel;
- ⦿ they might react in an aggressive way because they cannot understand how they should behave in order to be accepted and fit in.

Children who undergo emotional training from an early age are better equipped to regulate their emotions, communicate effectively and establish healthy relationships with others. They are also more likely to develop empathy and compassion towards others, which can lead to greater social cohesion and reduce the likelihood of conflict and bullying (Epstein, 1998). Ultimately, emotional intelligence is a critical component of overall wellbeing and happiness and early education in this area can lay the foundation for a lifetime of healthy cognitive and emotional development. Emotional intelligence helps children develop a better understanding of their own emotions and how they affect their behavior. This self-awareness can help them make better decisions and build resilience in the face of challenges (Ciarrochi & Mayer, 2013).

Therefore, in order to offer children a great start in the school environment and guide them towards self-confidence, self-efficacy and autonomy, parents and teachers alike need to invest energy in activities meant for developing the children's emotional intelligence. Teaching them to recognize and regulate their emotions, to communicate about what they feel and to take interest in what others feel has the potential to fix their maladaptive behaviours both at school and at home and to help them feel competent in their own life.

3.2. Methods and techniques for developing emotional intelligence from a young age

Emotional intelligence - just like intelligence and creativity - is in fact a general ability, which everyone possesses in some degree and which may be developed and trained through specific methods and techniques. Because the brain of children is highly oriented towards absorbing information, skills and facts, the sooner we approach the training of emotional intelligence in our lifetime, the better performances we get. Still, that doesn't mean that emotional intelligence cannot be developed during adulthood or at old age - actually it can, but the best way we may benefit from it is to master it before we reach maturity.

Further on, we list some educational goals and methodological approaches that may be applied in order to improve the emotional intelligence of 6-10 years old children:

- **Correct identification of personal emotions**: Children are not always able to name what they feel, because they probably don't have the concepts, but they can be directed to pay attention to the signals of their body and to describe them if they are asked the right questions; starting from this, they may gradually be taught to give names to what they feel; there are plenty of books for children on the market in the recent years on recognizing and naming emotions.
- **Emotional regulation techniques**: Recognizing what one feels inside is not enough for regulating the emotion; while we teach that any emotion is natural and helpful, we also need to teach that some behaviours triggered by certain emotions may harm ourselves or the others, so we need to be able to regulate emotions in order to express them in a functional manner - sofrology (breathing techniques), self-guided imagery, art therapy or drama-therapy techniques may all be utilized to teach children how to manage their own emotions and how to put them to good use.
- **Body language "reading":** Children are very good at observing body language (non-verbal language) and voice inflexions (para-verbal language), but they are not always aware on how to interpret those, thus doing specific exercises in which they need to observe non-verbal and para-verbal language and to correlate it with verbal language is very important.
- **Practice open and honest communication:** Communication is the fundamental tool humans use to learn and establish relationships, but it is also the perfect mean to regulate personal emotions - as expressing the emotional needs is the first condition for them to be satisfied - and the emotions of others - as the right words may be soothing and bring comfort to any soul.
- **Foster kindness and care:** encouraging kids to care for each other and show kindness to the people around them by involving them in charity or by offering them examples of good conduct is very important for building their abilities to initiate and maintain friendships and for nurturing empathy.
- **Build resilience:** Help pupils understand that setbacks are a natural part of life and teach them to bounce back from disappointments by focusing to the positive side of things instead of the negative ones and by accepting the things they cannot change.
- **Teach tolerance and prevent discrimination:** Teach children that people are different, but that is always a good thing because variety offers multiple opportunities and heterogeneity is an important premises of evolution, teach them to remain curious about one another and to accept their peers as a never-ending source of inspiration and knowledge.

- **Provide a safe and supportive environment:** Create an environment where pupils feel safe to express themselves and where their emotional growth and development are valued.

Further on, primary school children have certain age particularities, which may be exploited in the favour of a more nuanced educational approach - here is how:

- They are very curious.
    - Create learning experiences and present curiosities and fun facts that enable them to make associations and learn new concepts and skills.
- They are playful and they learn better when they enjoy themselves in the process.
    - Use gamification, role play and fun tasks to teach them concepts and practical skills.
- They need a lot of exterior validation, especially from adults.
    - Point out the positive aspects of their work and praise them for their efforts and progress, even when their skills need improvement.
- They are (still) quite tactile-oriented and very sensitive to touch and textures.
    - Offer them tactile learning experiences, in which they can create something during the learning process and don't be reluctant to hug them from time to time for emotional comfort.
- They're cognitive abilities are concrete-based (they cannot yet operate with abstract concepts).
    - Use lots of examples and concrete analogies to help them understand complex processes.
- They learn better by imitation and example.
    - Be a model of behaviour and they will follow rather than explaining complicate social rules.
- Their memory is short term-oriented.
    - Don't expect them to remember something you have discussed a month ago; use a lot of repetition and visual aids to help them remember important rules or concepts.
- They are highly creative and eager to express their imagination.
    - Let them use their imagination and creativity in the learning process, by challenging them to come up with ideas, create stories, art pieces, role play scenarios etc. which express their lessons learnt or which allow them to practice their skills.
- They are very easily disturbed by unpredicted situations that change their routine.
    - Feeling safe is essential for growth and development, so use reassurance for comfort, while teaching them to divide the elements of an undesired situation into 2 categories: (1) elements they can control and (2) those they cannot control and guiding them to stay focused on the things they can control; also, show them that there is "a spoonful of sugar in everything", that any situation has advantages and disadvantages and guide them towards the appreciation of the positive side rather than towards the disappointment of the negative one.

Emotional intelligence may be developed through consistent practice and reinforcement. By using these methods and techniques, adults can support children to develop emotional resilience, empathy and social skills that will help them throughout their lives. Moreover, the key is to make learning about emotional intelligence fun, engaging and practical.

3.3. Assessment of emotional intelligence

Development of emotional intelligence should always start from the current level of ability, thus the starting point of any developmental approach should be a training need analysis.

Assessing emotional intelligence of primary school pupils may be carried on using several methods:

- ✓ **observational assessments** - teachers or parents can observe children's behaviour in various situations to get a sense of their emotional intelligence; for example, how do they handle unexpected situations, how do they respond to different emotions (their own and others) and how do they communicate their feelings;
- ✓ **self-assessment** - for the pupils approaching 9-10 years old there are some tools which can be used to help children assess their own emotional intelligence, such as questionnaires or surveys; these tools can help children understand their own emotional strengths and areas for improvement, but they must be used with care as lower results could trigger feelings of shame and inferiority at this age;
- ✓ **interactive assessments** - there are games and activities which can be used to assess children's emotional intelligence, such as role-playing activities or board games that require emotional intelligence skills, such as empathy or social awareness;
- ✓ **feedback from others** - teachers, parents or peers can provide feedback to a child on their emotional intelligence, highlighting areas where they excel and areas where they can improve;
- ✓ **observation of their emotional expression** - look for signs of emotional expression, such as facial expressions, body language and tone of voice. Children who are emotionally intelligent tend to point out quite accurately what they feel and what is the cause of their feeling;
- ✓ **component assessment** - empathy, emotion regulation, emotion expression are key components of emotional intelligence; observation or assessment of these separate components may provide a better perspective upon the children's general ability of being emotionally intelligent;
- ✓ **standardized tests** - there are a number of standardized tests which may be used to assess children's emotional intelligence, such as the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory - Youth Version (Bar-OnEQ-i:YV), applicable for children of at least 7 years old.

It is important to note that emotional intelligence is a complex construct which may be difficult to assess accurately with one method, especially at such an early age. Therefore, a combination of methods may be necessary to get a comprehensive picture of a person's emotional intelligence. Additionally, it's important to remember that emotional intelligence is a skill that can be developed and nurtured over time, so providing children with opportunities to practice and develop their emotional intelligence is crucial.

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The role of teachers in the development of children's emotional intelligence

For primary school pupils, teachers become extensions of the family attachment figures and benefit from their full trust and hope. Because of this, teachers become significant sources of influence, often surpassing the parents' authority in some areas. As such, teachers are role models, mentors and guides shaping their pupils' behaviour and personality, including in areas related to emotional intelligence. Also, because of their close relationship at school, teachers' behaviours and demands may trigger certain emotional reactions in relation to the pupils' self-views and capacities, thus becoming self-confidence and self-efficacy architects - a role that must be addressed with care and responsibility.

4.1. Teachers as guides towards the development of emotional intelligence

Throughout Europe pupils spend, on a regular basis, between 4 and 8 hours in school, 5 days a week. That's up to a 3rd of their time. Thus, the role models they have and the people they meet in school undoubtedly leave a mark on their psycho-social development.

Looking deeper, to the influence teachers have upon their pupils' development of their emotional intelligence, we may be able to extract a few different functions that teachers play within this crucial stage of personal growth and development with a distinct contribution on the development of emotional intelligence:

- ✓ ***creating a safe learning environment*** - a supportive and empathetic classroom atmosphere allows pupils to express their feelings without fear, fostering emotional awareness and also teachers need to actively moderate conflicts and mediate different situations or even relationships at this stage, as he/ she is the only adult figure the pupils may turn to when they feel bad or when they are not able to handle events by themselves;
- ✓ ***teaching emotional literacy*** - educators can explicitly teach emotional vocabulary and recognition, helping young pupils label and understand their emotions by asking questions, using visual materials, put the right words to their feelings' descriptions;
- ✓ ***validating the children's emotions*** - children will display a wide range of emotions in the classroom, because that is what they usually do, while teachers are supposed to acknowledge and validate that emotion (no matter what it is or what has triggered it) as natural and useful and to teach children all emotions have a purpose;
- ✓ ***modelling emotion regulation*** - teachers can help small pupils to regulate their intense emotions, while also demonstrating how to manage emotions effectively, serving as models that the pupils will imitate;
- ✓ ***encouraging attention to others and social awareness*** - at this age, pupils still tend to be a little egocentric and not pay attention to their peer's needs and emotions, especially if they are not verbally communicated, thus teachers should make a goal out of stimulating their pupils to identify subtle para-verbal and non-verbal signals and to use them for identifying the other's emotions; on the same time, teachers should create experiential learning situations to help the pupils reflect on the impact of their own behaviours upon others;
- ✓ ***encouraging empathy*** - teachers can promote empathy by encouraging pupils to consider others' perspectives and feelings; they may also provide or create contexts in which to trigger small pupils to use their empathy skill;
- ✓ ***enriching social skills*** - teaching interpersonal skills like active listening and constructive communication is an

important objective in any socio-educational environment, as these skills will regulate the pupils' behaviour, will promote healthy interpersonal relationships and prevent conflict escalation, while also ensuring emotional intelligence development;

- ✓ ***fostering self-esteem*** - teachers can boost students' self-esteem through positive reinforcement and constructive feedback and in the case of small pupils, teachers should be extra careful with the way they provide feedback, as young children are more sensitive to criticism and their self-views may become easily affected if they feel unvalued.

In essence, teachers play a pivotal role in nurturing emotional intelligence, guiding their pupils in the maze of social interaction through the behaviour model they offer, through the knowledge they teach about the relationships and through the social skills they shape during the educational process.

Furthermore, by implementing emotional intelligence related activities into their everyday lesson plans, teachers might take their role to the next level of performance, in order to help the pupils reach their potential. Let's explore below the benefits that pupils have from such a practice:

- **holistic development:** Emotional intelligence is a critical aspect of human development, encompassing self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and interpersonal skills. By incorporating these components into lessons, educators can help pupils develop into well-rounded individuals who can navigate not only academic challenges but also, the complexities of their personal and social lives.
- **improved learning environment:** An emotionally intelligent classroom fosters a positive and inclusive learning environment. When pupils are taught to understand and manage their emotions, they are better equipped to handle stress, conflicts and interpersonal relationships, creating a more harmonious and conductive setting for learning.
- **enhance academic performance:** Research suggests a positive correlation between emotional intelligence and academic achievement. Students with strong emotional intelligence skills tend to perform better academically, because they can manage their emotions, focus on tasks and communicate effectively with teachers and peers.
- **long-term well-being:** Emotional intelligence is not just relevant in school; it is a lifelong skill that contributes to personal and professional success. Integrating emotional intelligence components prepares pupils for future challenges by equipping them with the tools to handle stress, build healthy relationships and make informed decisions.
- **conflict resolution:** emotional intelligence components help pupils manage conflicts and disagreements constructively. They learn to empathize with others, communicate their feelings effectively and work towards resolutions, reducing disruptive behaviour and fostering a more peaceful classroom atmosphere.
- **social skills:** emotional intelligence components enhance pupils' social skills, such as active listening, cooperation and collaboration. These skills are not only valuable in school, but also, in further careers and social interactions.
- **emotional resilience:** Teaching emotional intelligence helps pupils develop resilience in the face of adversity. They learn to bounce back from setbacks, adapt to changes and maintain a positive outlook, which is essential for both personal and academic growth.
- **prevention of bullying and harassment:** emotional intelligence education can contribute to reducing instances of bullying and harassment. Pupils who understand the impact of their actions on others are less likely to engage in negative behaviours, creating a safer and more inclusive school environment.
- **self-advocacy:** Pupils with strong emotional intelligence skills are better at advocating for their own needs. They can express their concerns, seek help when necessary and engage more actively in their own educational journey.
- **cultivating empathy:** emotional intelligence fosters empathy, which is essential for developing a sense of social

responsibility and compassion for others. This promotes a more caring and compassionate society.

Gathering the educational resources that teachers have at their disposal and focusing them at developing emotional intelligence in a systematic way somehow resembles to how doctors use laser beams to solve a medical problem: a small, but concentrated beam of “emotional light” will produce massive effects in the overall personality and development of the individual.

4.2. Tips and tricks for teachers set on dealing with emotions

Dealing with emotions is a complex process parallel to the educational goals already set by the curriculum and the teachers, that requires a specific set of skills on behalf of the teachers, but once we start using those skills, we realize that they come pretty natural when interacting with other people, as they are part of human functioning relations repertoire.

Here is what teachers can do:

- ☯ ***Offer emotional support:***
    - Be available and receptive when the children need to talk or express their feelings. Teachers should remember that, at this age, pupils still need to rely on an adult in certain situations.
    - Provide physical comfort (e.g. hug, reassuring touch), when appropriate, just as parent would, as teachers are extensions of the attachment figures the children have in their families.
- ☯ ***Active listening:***
    - Pay full attention when the child is speaking.
    - Maintain eye contact and use nonverbal cues to show you are engaged.
    - Avoid interrupting or finishing their sentences.
    - Reflect on what they say before responding.
    - Use conjectures when you observe children struggling with expressing a certain idea and ask for their validation if you got it right.
- ☯ ***Empathize and validate:***
    - Show empathy by acknowledging their feelings.
    - Validate their emotions by reassuring them that’s ok to feel the way they do.
- ☯ ***Use open-ended questions:***
    - Encourage conversation by asking open-ended questions that require more than a simple “yes” or “no” answer (e.g. “Can you tell me more about what’s bothering you?”).
- ☯ ***Use appropriate language:***
    - Adapt your language and communication style to the children’s age and developmental level.
    - Avoid using jargon or complex terms that may confuse them.
    - Small pupils have a concrete way of reasoning, so try to use examples from the things they relate to in order to make a point.
- ☯ ***Respect their pace:***
    - Give the child space and time to open up. Some children may need more time to feel comfortable sharing their emotions. Imposing a more rapid pace, may discourage the children.
- ☯ ***Avoid judgment:***
    - Refrain from passing judgment or criticizing their feelings or reactions.
    - Create a safe and non-judgmental space for them to express themselves.
    - Beware of the critics or harsh judgements from the peers, try to rephrase those if you catch them or counteract them with a validation.
    - Make a goal out of modelling a non-judgemental attitude and an atmosphere of tolerance in the classroom.
- ☯ ***Share your own feelings:***
    - When appropriate, share your own feelings and experiences to demonstrate that it’s normal to have emotions and to show vulnerability. Children are prone to learn from examples, but they also tend to idealize their role models up to the point in which some behaviours might seem unachievable to them. Thus, sharing the vulnerabilities might help

them relate better and feel encouraged to work in order to achieve the ability level they desire.

- ***Use art & play:***
    - Younger children may find it easier to express their emotions through art, drawing or play. Provide opportunities for creative expression.
    - Beware of the self-limitations that might arise in the pupils' self-expression due to the perception that they lack artistic talent. Encourage the free expression and point out that the process is more important than the product.
- ***Storytelling:***
    - Share stories or books that address emotions and feelings, which can help children understand and talk about their own emotions.
    - Try to avoid explaining the stories and to encourage the pupils to come up with their own interpretations of the message.
- ***Model emotional expression:***
    - Demonstrate healthy emotional expression by managing your own emotions constructively. Children often learn by observing adults.
    - Small pupils might be very energetic and active and not easily complying to classroom rules and that might become disturbing when we concentrate on our own list of tasks, but remember that their self-control skills are under development and that, although enhancing cognitive skills and teaching content is very important, we should always prioritize taking care of the souls first.
- ***Avoid over-reacting:***
    - Maintain a calm and composed demeanour, especially when the child is upset. Your calmness can help them feel safe.
    - Over-reacting often adds fuel to the fire and amplifies the negative emotions that everybody is already feeling, while inhibiting the part of the brain responsible for learning.
- ***Maintain consistency:***
    - Be consistent in your responses and availability, so the child knows they can rely on your support.
    - Remember that a strong relationship is built over time and that children need constant reassuring before they will be able to provide it for themselves.
    - Pay extra attention specifically to the pupils coming from separated families or who have experienced some form of abuse or abandonment, as they often have difficulties trusting other people.
- ***Respect privacy:***
    - If the children share something personal, respect their privacy and do not share it with others without their permission.
    - But if you feel that pupils may benefit from sharing their situation or if they have broken some rule, encourage them to come forward on their own.
- ***Follow up:***
    - Check in with the children later to see how they are feeling. This shows that you genuinely care about their emotional well-being.

Sometimes pupils whose emotions teachers should address have behavioural issues of some sort which seems to complicate the interactions between them. Here are some recommendations for teachers in order to guide them in improving such pupils' situations:

- ***build a positive relationship:*** establish a positive and supportive relationship with a child. Show empathy, patience and understanding.
- ***set clear expectations:*** clearly communicate classroom rules and expectations from the beginning of the school year. Be consistent in enforcing these rules and provide regular reminders.
- ***use positive reinforcement:*** recognize and reward good behaviour. Offer praise, stickers or small incentives to reinforce positive actions, in order to motivate students to exhibit desired behaviours.
- ***provide structure and routine:*** children with behavioural issues often benefit from a structured and predictable classroom environment. Maintain a consistent daily schedule with clear transitions and routines.

- *offer choices:* give students choices within boundaries (e.g., allow them to choose between two assignments or activities). This can help them feel a sense of autonomy and reduce power struggles.
- *implement behaviour plans:* work with the school's special education team or counsellors to develop individualized behaviour plans for students with persistent issues. These plans can include specific strategies for managing and improving behaviour.
- *use visual aids:* visual schedules, charts, or reminders can be effective for children with behavioural issues. Visual cues help them understand expectations and manage their behaviour.
- *teach self-regulation:* teach students self-regulation techniques (e.g., deep breathing, counting to ten or using "cooling off" space), when they feel overwhelmed or frustrated.
- *provide immediate feedback:* address behavioural issues promptly and privately when necessary. Use "I" statements to express your feelings and observations rather than making accusatory statements.
- *differentiate instructions:* tailor your teaching methods to accommodate the child's individual needs and learning style. Adjusting the curriculum and providing extra support can reduce frustration and acting out.
- *monitor progress:* continuously assess and monitor the child's behaviour and progress. Keep records of incidents and improvements to track changes over time.
- *model appropriate behaviour:* demonstrate the behaviours and social skills you expect from the students. Children often learn by observing and imitating adults.

And here are also some ideas on how to approach a child with behavioural issues:

- ✓ *nonverbal cues:* use nonverbal cues to convey understanding and empathy. Maintain eye contact, use a calm tone of voice, and avoid crossing your arms, which can be perceived as confrontational.
- ✓ *listen actively:* allow the child to express their feelings and concerns. Listen actively without interrupting or judging. Sometimes, children act out because they feel unheard.
- ✓ *validate feelings:* acknowledge the child's emotions and feelings, even if you don't agree with their behaviour. Validating their emotions can help them feel understood and less defensive.
- ✓ *use positive language:* frame instructions and feedback positively: e.g., instead of saying "Stop running in the hallway", say "Please, walk in the hallway".
- ✓ *set clear boundaries:* reinforce classroom rules and expectations consistently. Be clear about the consequences of certain behaviours while emphasizing that you believe in their ability to make better choices.
- ✓ *reinforce positive behaviour:* recognize and praise the child when they exhibit positive behaviour. Reinforcement can motivate them to continue making good choices.
- ✓ *provide emotional support:* offer comfort and reassurance when the child is upset. Sometimes, a brief break or a few moments of emotional support can help them regain control.
- ✓ *individualized approach:* recognize that each child is unique and what works for one may not work for another. Tailor your approach to the child's specific needs and changes.

Teachers may choose from so many different styles of teaching and so many different contents, so many methods and so many resources that they may use, but there is one thing which should remain a constant for every person who choses this position: *the care* for the frail, yet full of potential young persons sitting in front of them and absorbing their every word.

behavioural and disadaptive problems

Human beings are developing a relation with their own physical and social environment ever since they come into this world. They are living in social systems - family, groups of friends, community - which they may get to influence, but that also leave an imprint upon their social behaviour and on their psychological development as well. Their psychological functioning is an inner system, as well, as all the processes and functions are interconnected. This chapter tackles the systemic perspective upon the psycho-social development of the individual and will attempt to explain how the behavioural and dis-adaptive problems are not actually individual, but social.

5.1. The systemic principles and the general theory of systems

The ***system*** is an abstract totality in which the whole means more than the sum of all its parts, because these parts interact with one another. Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1968, 1969) was the first biologist who pointed out that living organisms' growth over time may be regarded as systemic and summarized the systemic principles:

As stated by Bertalanffy (1969), the characteristics of the system are:

- *non-summativity totality* - the whole represents more than the sum of all its parts;
- *open system/ closed system* - the exchanges with the exterior environment are accepted, but filtered in order to maintain integrity and identity;
- *homeostasis* - the balance between two tendencies of a system: changing and maintaining of a status quo; this expresses the natural tendency of a system to maintain coherence, stability, security and balance in the physical and social environment;
- *equifinality (unpredictability principle)* - in an open system any given state can be reached by many potential means; two different intermediary states can lead to the same final state, this is why in an open system the actual state does not allow us nor to deduct its history, nor to predict its future;
- *adjustment mechanisms* - in order to maintain homeostasis, a system may use:
    - *linear adjustment* - in which an event A determines an event B, meaning that A influences B and B has no influence upon A; according to this mechanism, human behaviours can be explained through past experiences;
    - *circular adjustment* - events A, B and C influence the event D, which in return will influence events A, B, and C, resulting a circular relationship, without beginning and end in which A, B, C, D, influence each other; according to this mechanism human behaviours can be explained through direct observation of relational exchanges;
- *tendency towards growth, development, change* - in any functional system there will appear several modifications to which the system needs to adapt; the incapacity to adapt to change indicates a rigid and dysfunctional system;
- *hierarchic organization* - any system is hierarchically organized, having several subsystems; within the family we can identify the parental subsystem (parents), the couple subsystem (the couple relationship is different than the parents relationship), the fraternal subsystem (children), considering the hierarchy between the parents and the children.

5.2. The family as a system

The family members have established interactional patterns and the family is a lot more than the sum of its own members. Thus, any family is a system consisting of its members and all the relational patterns among those and having all the general characteristics of the systems.

The individual experience and behaviour take place within the context of an interpersonal system, in which the family represents the most basic and powerful system. Everything one thinks, feels or does is related to this system (Parsons, 1951).

Every behaviour, no matter how irrational it may seem when viewed from outside the system, makes sense in a certain context and the analysis of every problematic behaviour may reveal a certain function of the symptom. The symptomatic behaviours often arise at moments when it becomes necessary to adapt or change rules that have been in force until that point and are no longer adequate or useful for the system: such moments may be represented by the birth of a child, a child starting school or reaching adolescence, the separation or the divorce of the parents, the departure or disappearance of one member of the family etc., in which the homeostasis of the family is shaken and the rules and the relationships between the members of the family must be re-defined. In this context, every "bad" behaviour has a "good" reason, meaning every symptom has a function of protecting the family system from undergoing any dangerous change and in spite the pain it may cause, it brings benefits for each member of the family. The dysfunctional behaviour thus represents the best solution that the family has come up with to ensure its survival (Dău-Gașpar, Muranyi, Zamoșteanu, 2018).

5.3. The school as a system

Not seldom happens that the school is compared with a family and that is because the rules that govern the dynamics of the two are very similar. In a school class, for example, each student takes on a certain role - the rebel, the geek, the teacher's pet, the buffoon etc. - that seem to fulfil his/ her emotional and social needs through various mechanisms that he/ she has learnt in his/ her own family and behaves accordingly. If the role one plays meets another complementary role, the two persons acting them will start a certain relational dynamic that will abide by the systemic principles. Further on, that might consecutively draw around other people, thus creating a wider system. For instance, if one student acts as a rebel, another one, possibly the teacher, might act as "tamer", trying to control the rebel's behaviour, but if the method of putting down the rebellion fails, other students might like the power that the rebel seems to have and will join in, thus forming a rebellious group. Other students will cease the opportunity to ally with the teacher and become teacher's pets, snitches or the heroes trying to save the day (Dău-Gașpar, Muranyi, Zamoșteanu, 2018). Gradually the dynamic settles in and starts to define that school group or class.

If we zoom out from the school group, we realize that in fact the school group is a subsystem in the system of a whole school. If we are to identify some of the components of the school regarded as a system, we might name: the management, the administrative staff, the teachers, the students, the nurses, the counsellors etc. All these components are related to one another and every single change of either one of them will eventually affect the whole system. For instance, if the secretary is not present for a week, not just the activity of the administrative and management staff will be perturbed, as they might get stuck or overloaded, but also that of the students and of the teachers, who might miss some information or get asked to work supplementary time to complete databases or such.

And if we zoom out even more, we will be able to see how any school becomes a subsystem in the educational system of a country or a certain geographical area. The systemic principles apply to each level, even though the components might be different. The dysfunctional links between some components will reflect upon all the others (Jones 2015).

5.4. Systemic thinking

Systemic thinking refers to the ability to see the relations between the elements of a system, to be able to look beyond the facts and understand situations in relation with the context that they happened in, to identify rules and patterns that are not explicit and only have meaning when viewed through the lens of interconnectedness.

Each individual represents an element within one or several systems and interacts with other elements of the same systems - in this respect any new interaction with an element from a different system creates a new system and if these systems are included in others we can refer to them as ***subsystems***. In practice, the whole community is a big system, in which there are included family systems, support systems (friends, neighbours etc.), professional systems and each small system could be divided into several subsystems (couple's subsystem, parents' subsystem, children's subsystem, organizational departments' subsystems, project team subsystems etc.) (Minuchin et al., 2015).

The attributes that help identify each element are its behaviours and the behaviours are triggered by the contexts, not just by one context but several at the same time. As one can see in the picture (fig. 1.), one individual taken in any moment in time can be influenced by several layers of systems and subsystems and all these influences will be reflected in a simple, almost instinctive, gesture. For instance, if one child destroys a toy in kindergarden, that is not just because he was in the mood to do that and systemic thinkers should be able to see a bigger picture in order to understand the motivation. If we look at the immediate context of the behaviour, we might find out that the little boy got frustrated because the toy he was playing with was taken by a little girl, a girl that he was really fond of. He was taught in the family that he should protest if other people make things that annoy him, so he would have liked to protest somehow, but he was also taught by his teacher that it is a bad thing to heart the people we love, so he won't discharge upon the girl. On the other hand he might also feel the pressure of the peer group that might make fun of him because he let a girl take away the toy, so he wants to look strong and offer a power statement. He also knows that running away or leaving the room is a sign of weakness, because he heard his grandmother say that "while rabbits run away, wolfs stay and fight" and he also experienced some fear when he overheard the policeman say to his dad about their neighbour, who destroyed some things in anger, that for some juridical reason there is nothing he can do about it. All of these thoughts and emotions have thus conducted him towards an only logical behaviour: protect the girl, but protest and show his power, while staying invincible like the neighbour, through destroying the toy. Of course, there would have been different options to react, but in the little boy's mind that reaction might have been the one that made the most sense (Weist et al., 2017).

Along with the basic principles of the systems, the systemic thinking presumes a good use of certain concepts and terms that appear in a recurrent way in the systemic-dialectical approach (Lipman, 1995):

- ✓ ***integrality*** - refers to the interdependency and inter-relations of the members' behaviours within a system;
- ✓ ***feedback*** - represents the answers or reactions given by the system, most of the times through amplifying or diminishing certain patterns of interaction, as a result of the pressures or stimuli from the outside or from within the system;
- ✓ ***equifinality*** - the same results in terms of behaviours or emotions can be obtained through various ways or starting from different triggers;
- ✓ ***circularity*** or ***circular interactions*** - exchanges in a system have a circular nature, because each behaviour is a reaction to another person's actions (the so-called triggers) and most of the times the initial behaviour of the whole circuit remains hidden in the past of the system;
- ✓ ***hierarchy*** - the manner in which power is distributed among the members and the subsystems of the family;
- ✓ ***complementarity*** - the behaviours and the roles that individuals has within a system are complementary with the behaviours and the roles that other members of the same system have; if one member of the system is low-functioning, another could become hyper-functioning.

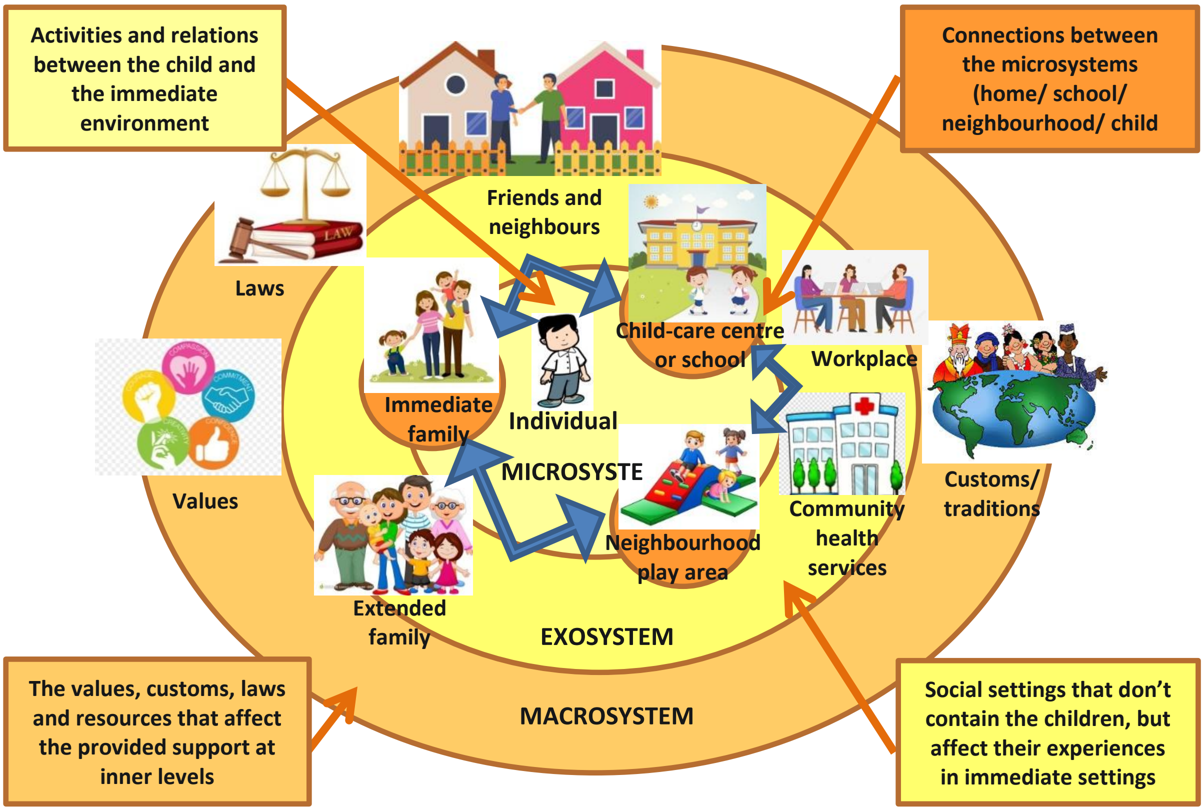
Activities and relations between the child and the immediate environment
Connections between the microsystems (home/ school/ neighbourhood/ child
Friends and neighbours
Laws
Child-care centre or school
Workplace
Immediate family
Individual
Values
MICROSYSTE
Customs/ traditions
Community health services
Neighbourhood play area
Extended family
EXOSYSTEM
MACROSYSTEM
The values, customs, laws and resources that affect the provided support at inner levels
Social settings that don't contain the children, but affect their experiences in immediate settings

Fig. 2. Structure of systems and subsystems in the social environment

Any professional who uses the systemic lens in order to look at the behaviours of other people or, even children, should be able to extract a pattern from observing the interactions of that person in repeated circumstances and understand how the behaviours are linked to one another in the circular dynamic, how the power is distributed and in what manner are the members of the system trying to re-establish balance.

Teachers and educators of all sorts are invited to measure up to task of seeing the children or the pupils, whose education they are trying to guide, beyond their dis-adaptive and non-conformist behaviours and refrain from labelling them as "bad or undisciplined", as these behaviours are just attempts of adaptation to a dysfunctional environment and pupils are not to blame for their behaviours, but they need to be supported to find new and more functional ways of coping to the social and emotional challenges they are faced with. The systemic lens will guide teachers and pupils with dis-adaptive behaviours towards a more secure path to an effective educational process.

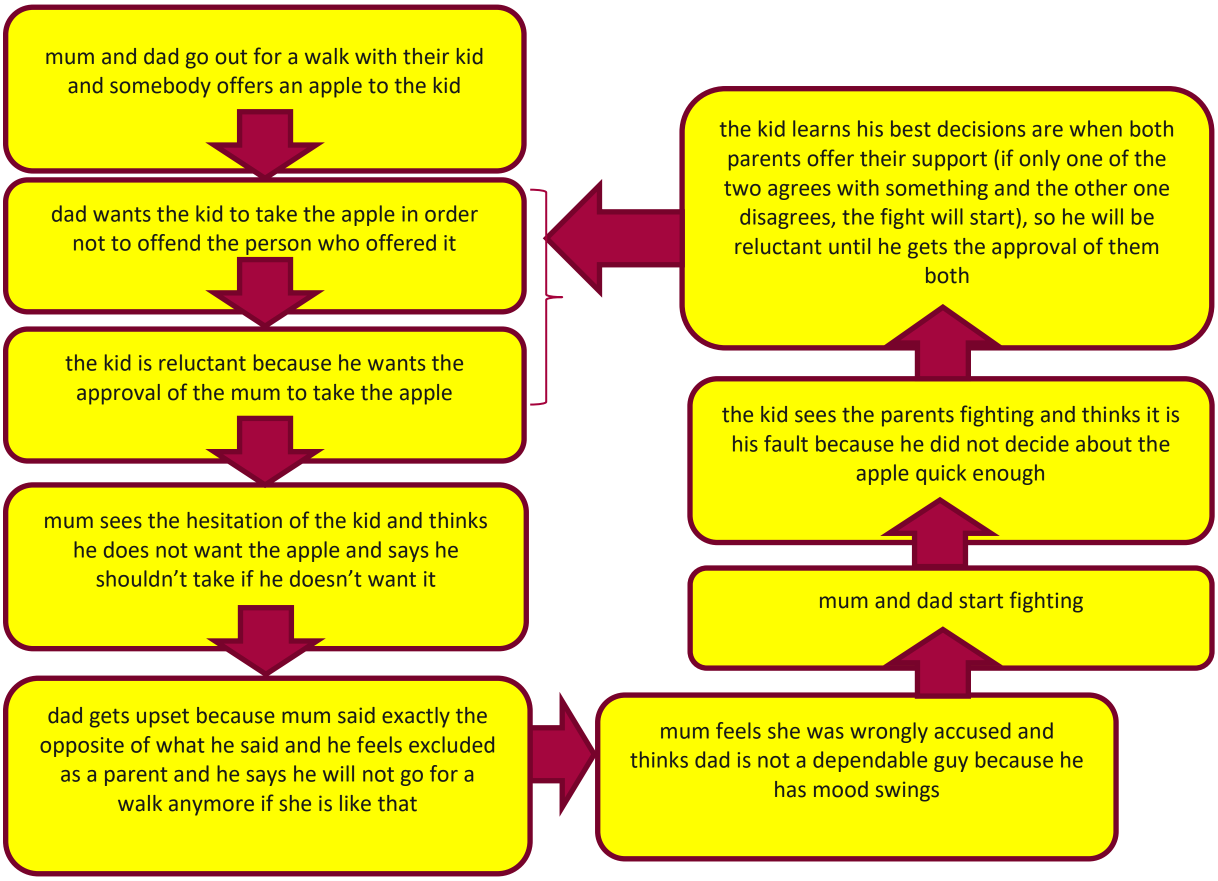
mum and dad go out for a walk with their kid and somebody offers an apple to the kid
dad wants the kid to take the apple in order not to offend the person who offered it
the kid is reluctant because he wants the approval of the mum to take the apple
mum sees the hesitation of the kid and thinks he does not want the apple and says he shouldn't take if he doesn't want it
dad gets upset because mum said exactly the opposite of what he said and he feels excluded as a parent and he says he will not go for a walk anymore if she is like that
mum feels she was wrongly accused and thinks dad is not a dependable guy because he has mood swings
mum and dad start fighting
the kid sees the parents fighting and thinks it is his fault because he did not decide about the apple quick enough
the kid learns his best decisions are when both parents offer their support (if only one of the two agrees with something and the other one disagrees, the fight will start), so he will be reluctant until he gets the approval of them both

Fig. 3. Example of circularity in the family

5.5. How to apply the systemic lens

In order to be able to apply the systemic lens, here are some quick questions teachers and educators might ask themselves next time they witness a dysfunctional behaviour at school, at home or in the street:

- What is the vulnerability of that child/ student/ person? What is the emotional need that he/ she might have?
- What problem is he/ she trying to solve? What is the function of the disruptive behaviour? What does the child/ pupil/ person achieve by that behaviour?
- What can I do to make that child/ pupil/ person feel better about himself/ herself? If it was me in his/ her shoes, what would I need to feel safe and loved?
- How can I help the child/ pupil/ person to satisfy his/ her emotional needs in a different way? What alternative behaviours are there that he/ she is not seeing?

The rule of the thumb in all these chains of complicated - and sometimes dis-adaptive - behaviours is that all human beings need somebody to appreciate their qualities, to make them feel respected and important and safe and loved for who they really are. So, if the occasion of labelling a behaviour as being bad or a labelling a child as being maladapted arises, let's try to look beyond it, at the vulnerable child who is "hungry" for love and just give him/ her that.

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PART 2. PRACTICAL GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING THE EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE WITHIN THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

Chapter 6. Guidelines for teachers

Chapter 7. Guidelines for specialists for individual work

Chapter 8. Guidelines for specialists for group work

Chapter 9. Parent support

Chapter 10. Cross-cultural best practices

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Guidelines for teachers

6.1. Principles of working in a trans-disciplinary way

Collaborating across disciplines to tackle complicated challenges is known as trans-disciplinary education. Working across disciplines is particularly successful, as educational studies have long demonstrated that pupils are better able to integrate concepts from many fields of study and have a deeper awareness of both the environment they live in and the knowledge they are learning. The reason for this is that learning and integrating new information with prior knowledge heavily depends on the process of association in the brain. Therefore, the more connections pupils can make between various ideas, the higher their level of comprehension and logical learning will be.

Here are some key principles of working in a trans-disciplinary way:

- *shared goals* - collaborators should have a common understanding of the problem and shared objectives, focusing on the broader goal rather than disciplinary boundaries;
- *open communication* - effective communication is essential to bridge disciplinary gaps, fostering mutual understanding and respect;
- *diverse expertise* - involve experts from various fields to bring diverse perspectives and knowledge to the table;
- *flexibility* - be open to adapting methods and approaches from different disciplines to suit the specific problem at hand;
- *integration* - integrate insights and findings from multiple disciplines to create a holistic understanding of the problem;
- *continuous learning* - embrace a mindset of lifelong learning and be willing to acquire new skills and knowledge from other disciplines;
- *problem-centred approach* - focus on solving real-world problems rather than staying within the confines of disciplinary boundaries;
- *interdisciplinary leadership* - effective leadership is crucial to facilitate collaboration, manage conflicts, and guide the trans-disciplinary process;
- *respect for differences* - recognize and appreciate the differences in language, methodologies, and perspectives among disciplines;
- *evaluation and reflection* - regularly assess the progress and impact of trans-disciplinary work, making adjustments as needed.

Innovative solutions to challenging problems can come from trans-disciplinary work, but it takes dedication, adaptability, and a readiness to cross disciplinary boundaries.

6.2. Principles of working with small pupils with behavioural problems

Since behaviours outside of social norms may cause issues in the community and have a wider impact on the social environment, school instruction should also address the intervention and prevention of these behaviours.

Specific behavioural problems which occur in primary school years:

- *attention instability/ attention deficit* - frequently linked to hyperkineticism - the pupil is constantly on the move, talks loudly, answers without being questioned, disturbs the learning atmosphere of the class, sometimes causing general indiscipline; such pupils are unable to concentrate their attention for long periods of time, get bored quickly and solve tasks of any kind in an impulsive way;
- *laziness/ tendency to avoid tasks* - it may have an organic substrate, when it is characterised by a decrease in the ability to study as a result of organic disorders, sensory-motor defects, mental overwork etc., or it may be character related, when it is a tendency to deliberately not carry out school tasks or other sorts, as a form of opposition to intellectual or physical effort

or to certain situations or rules, which are considered unfair;

- *pathological lying* - with the exception of instances of lying to avoid punishment, often found in children - this behaviour is typically harmful and it is usually the result of lack of self-control, emotional poverty, inadequate personality development or mental deficiency;
- *negativity* - comprises the expression of an apparently unjustified attitude of refusal to perform tasks and passive or active resistance to external or internal demands; such pupils exhibit apathy, indifference, stubbornness, opposition, obstinacy, destruction of school supplies or toys etc.;
- *aggressiveness* - refers to the propensity of a person to act out violently; this behaviour can either be aimed at oneself and referred as self-aggressive acts (e.g. pulling out hair, biting nails etc.) or be aimed against others and referred as hetero-aggressive acts, (e.g. verbal violence, physical aggression, destruction of property etc.); usually, pupils' violence is strongly associated with frustration, which is typically brought on by lack of affection or by a false feeling self-worth
- *theft* - is characterised by the fraudulent removal of items belonging to another person or even the school, whether they are valuable or not; theft may occur for a number of reasons: out of necessity, for training purposes, the instigation of others, to test one's skills, as a reaction of imitation or as an act of protest or retaliation.
- *psychosomatic symptoms* - often at this age, the anxiety and fear are reflected in sudden somatic complaints (e.g. stomach-aches, headaches, nausea etc.), which are treated with much disbelief by the adults (parents or teachers) even though they may feel very real for the children.

All early school deviant behaviour prevention and intervention strategies focus on eliminating or reducing risk factors that contribute to shape, or initiate deviant behaviour. The promotion of social and educational policies suitable for counteracting juvenile deviant behaviour is another of these strategies, as it is guaranteeing the environment for the harmonious development of the growing personality.

The home, the classroom or the society at large may all be the target of initiatives to stop and combat deviant behaviour. The following are the primary actions that need to be taken to curb disruptive behaviour in schools:

- avoiding overburdening by drawing up analytical programmes appropriate to the child's age and stage of intellectual development;
- respecting the holidays and rest periods, which are necessary for the physical and psychological recovery of the child integrated into the education system;
- accepting the variety of personalities and learning styles and rhythms of the pupils and adapting the school tasks and demands to the children's capacities, instead of expecting them all to perform at the same level and responding at the same educational methods,
- educating teachers by encouraging them to attend training courses and seminars and to learn new teaching methods and practices;
- emotional education - youngsters should be provided with assistance in comprehending and managing their emotions;
- counselling for parents - the family is the main environment capable of regulating the children's emotions and behaviours, but families also need training and support in order to that.

It should be mentioned that all complex approaches require the cooperation of experts from different fields of activity. Thus, a crucial component of programs aimed at preventing and combating deviant behaviour is the development of multidisciplinary teams.

Additionally, educators need to remember that kids who have already exhibited deviant behaviour will typically be labelled in a negative way by their peers and by the community, which leads to marginalization and exclusion. In order to give the children with behavioural problems the assistance they need to get through this phase, it is helpful to establish up a social support network. These networks can play a critical role in the success of programs designed to address behavioural problems. To stop additional school maladjustment and to help the children's integration and school functioning, this network should also include the teachers, the parents and the experts.

6.3. Practical activities

Any question that triggers the children's reflection, may help them become more emotional intelligent.

The technique of incomplete sentences is a very accessible and straightforward way to accomplish a variety of development objectives in both individual and group work. The pupils must finish the phrases started by the teacher.

This approach can be applied to a number of tasks and learning objectives, including summarizing activities, overcoming obstacles, expressing emotions and fostering positive group dynamics. It can be utilized in both group and individual work, but if you use it in a group setting, don't forget to give participants the option to stop at any point if the topic is too challenging, for example.

One by one, the pupils are invited to complete the provided sentences by the teacher. The teacher will offer the opportunity for the pupils not to speak on a particular topic and will not insist on receiving a comment if they don't wish to. Also, the teacher will not prevent other pupils from adding anything when sentences are being completed. The teacher may suggest finishing another statement when the previous subject has run its course. The dialogue may take on the tone of free speech.

Examples, by categories of sentences:

- **describing the facts:**
  - During our work, my task was...
  - My job was...
  - During the execution of the task it happened...
- **describing strengths:**
  - In my opinion, the best realized aspect of the work was...
  - If I had to do this task again, I would definitely repeat...
  - I did best...
- **describing areas for improvement:**
  - In my opinion, the worst aspect of the work was...
  - The thing that went the worst for me...
  - If I had to do this task again, I would certainly do differently...
- **collecting educational benefits (this type of sentence can be used in situations of failure and difficulty):**
  - Doing this task taught me...
  - The most developmental task for me was... because...
  - The element of the project that was a challenge for me was...
  - This difficulty taught me...
- **planning their next actions:**
  - In my opinion, next time I'll do...
  - The issue that I will change in the next project will be...
  - If I had to pick one particular thing to change, it would be...
- **summarizing and opening up about emotions:**
  - Finally, I would like to add that... (this sentence usually reveals what people really care about and how they feel)
  - I would like to thank you for...
  - The most moving moment was...
  - The greatest joy aroused in me...
  - The most motivating aspect of the work was...
- **building good relationships in the group:**
  - What you don't know about me yet...
  - I really like our group for...
  - The moment that I liked the most in the "life" of our group was...
  - I would like to thank the group for...
  - I would like to apologize to all of you for...
  - In order for everyone in our group to feel better, I commit to...

SELF-AWARENESS

- Focusing on emotions and inner world:

1. How do you feel today? Reflection on your own mood.

The teacher provides the pupils with the following images of gestures and asks them to express the mood that accompanies them today. Thumbs up - it's great. The thumb in the middle (parallel) is so-so. Thumbs down - it's bad.

👍 it's great 👉 so 👎 it's bad

2. Naming your mood

The teacher asks the pupils to think about it and say:

- what mood they are in now (happy, sad, embarrassed, etc.),
- whether this emotion is pleasant or unpleasant,
- what has put them in such a mood.

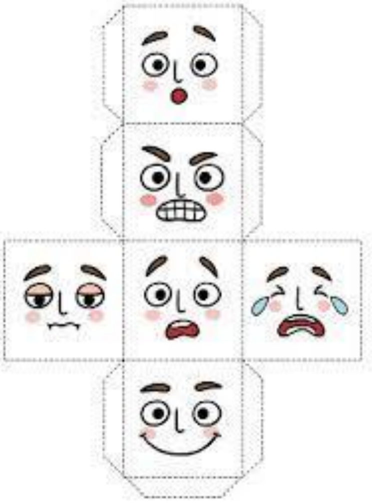
3. Success

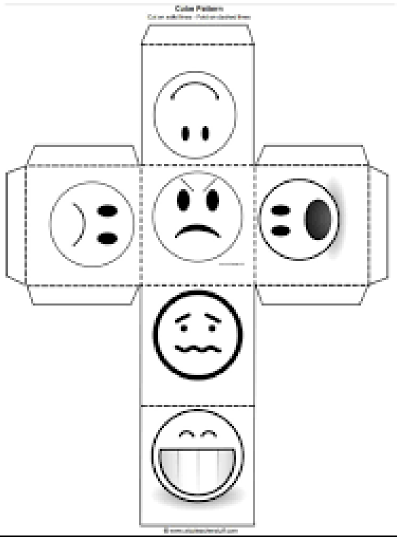
The teacher asks the pupils to think about success and answer the following questions:

- *What is your success in today's class (what have you succeeded?)*
- *What did you find difficult?*

4. Cube of feelings

The teacher invites the pupils to sit in a circle. One pupil throws a "dice of feelings" (a large cube made of cardboard/ plastic with emotional states pictured/ written on each face: sad, joyful, curious, ashamed, angry, calm) and then describes the moments when he/ she usually experiences the feeling "chosen" by the dice. The next pupil rolls the dice and repeats the task.





5. In what situations do you feel

The teacher asks the pupils to think about and share in which situations they are feeling: joy, anger, sadness, disappointment, surprise, fear etc. Depending on the pupils' age, they may draw or describe the situation.

◉ Focusing on the body:

6. Show emotions

The teacher asks the pupils to express with facial expressions: anger, sadness, joy, disgust, shame, fear, surprise etc.

7. What do I feel when…

The teacher gives examples of different situations in which the pupils may find themselves, asking them to present their emotions with facial expressions and gestures.

Examples of situations:

- receiving a gift;
- losing the favourite toy;
- best friends fighting;
- being alone in a dark room.

8. Box of emotions

The teacher invites the pupils to draw cards with specific emotions. Their task is to assign the cards to either a black box (unpleasant emotions) or to a white one (pleasant emotions) and to justify their decision.

9. Dance

The teacher invites the pupils to move according to the melody of the music:

- low and slow sounds - showing e.g. sadness, anger, fear.
- high and fast sounds - showing e.g. joy, satisfaction.

10. My favourite thing

The teacher invites the pupils to identify and describe something of value to them. They explain its origin and the type of feelings associated with this object. The following instruction might be used:

"Each of us has something that is particularly important and valuable to us. We like to use it or just look at it. Today we have the opportunity to talk about things that are important to you. Today's topic of short conversation is "My favourite thing". Perhaps you have a few things that are important to you. Some you have had for a long time and others you got recently. I would like to invite each of you to talk about something that is important to you and what makes you value it. Maybe it was given to you by someone you like/ love or maybe you have raised money for it by doing extra chores at home. Such a thing can be something you like to wear, play with or work with or it's just a thing that looks nice in your room. Think about that for a moment."

Questions for discussion:

- *What makes certain things special to us?*
- *Do you think it's important for us to have our favourite things? Why? Why not?*
- *What did you learn about yourself today during the group discussion?*

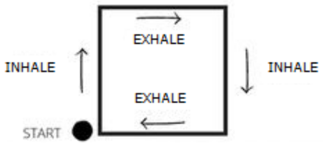
SELF-MANAGEMENT

1. Deep breath

The teacher gives the pupils the following instruction and asks them to inhale and exhale deeply for a few times:

"*Close your eyes, take a deep breath and then slowly let the air out. Focus on the movement of the chest and try not to think about anything else. If you have a race of thoughts in your head, acknowledge them, but don't focus on them, let them go, focusing on the breath instead.*"

I can breathe a square



2. Breathing - sensations from the body

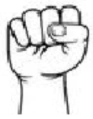
The teacher gives the pupils the following instruction and asks them to inhale and exhale deeply for a few times:

"*Start breathing slowly. When you inhale, count to 6 and then exhale slowly, letting the accumulated tension escape to the outside. Watch as air enters your body and gives it the strength to live and then notice how you release unnecessary tension to the outside as you exhale.*"

3. Muscle tension - focusing on sensations from the body

The teacher initiates a relaxation activity and invites pupils to clench their fists and then loosen them.

I can clench my fist and then loosen it



4. Butterfly hug - lowering the tension

The teacher invites the pupils to do a movement activity and gives the following instructions:

- *Sit back, close your eyes and imagine a quiet, beautiful place. For example, the seashore, forest, meadow.*
- *Imagine you're there.*

- *Focus on what sounds you hear in this place, what smells you pick up, what you feel under your feet or under your fingers.*
- *Cross your arms on your chest and touch your arms with your hands. Embrace yourself. All the time imagine yourself in this peaceful beautiful place. What do you hear? How do you feel?*

5. Heart rhythm

The teacher asks the pupils to act the following activity:

- *Put your right hand on your heart, focus on how it beats.*
- *Think about the fact that it is pumping blood to all the cells of your body right now so that you can do many different things.*
- *Try to focus all your attention on the sensations of your body.*

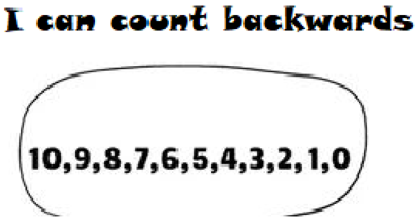
6. Tree - muscle relaxation

The teacher asks the pupils to act the following activity:

- *Be like a tree. Stand upright and close your eyes.*
- *Imagine that you are a mighty tree that grows out of the ground.*
- *Let your hands hang freely. Imagine that these are branches moving in a gentle wind. But remember that the tree trunk is solid and resistant to blowing.*
- *Focus on the sensations of your body.*
- *Open your eyes, slowly look around, you are yourself again.*

7. Countdown

The teacher asks the pupils to count backwards from 10 to 0 (in order to manage the intensity of emotions).

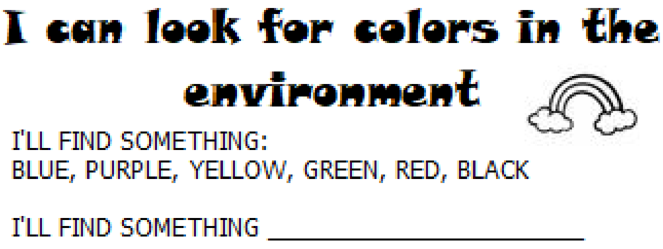


I can count backwards

10,9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1,0

8. Ambient colours

The teacher asks the pupils to look for objects of different colours in the room.



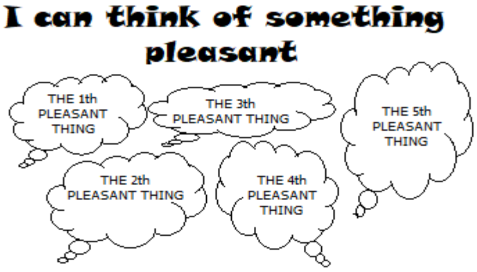
I can look for colors in the environment

I'LL FIND SOMETHING:
BLUE, PURPLE, YELLOW, GREEN, RED, BLACK

I'LL FIND SOMETHING ______________________

9. Thinking of something enjoyable

The teacher asks the pupils to create a list with the things they enjoy. The teacher encourages them to find as many as they can.


I can think of something pleasant
THE 1th PLEASANT THING
THE 3th PLEASANT THING
THE 5th PLEASANT THING
THE 2th PLEASANT THING
THE 4th PLEASANT THING

10. Sounds

The teacher initiates an exercise with a gong (if a gong is not available, a guitar string may be used or the most sonorous kitchen utensils or two metal lids). The teacher hits the gong. Children listen carefully to the vibration of sound. They raise their hand when nothing is heard. They remain silent for one more minute and listen carefully to all the other sounds that arise. Finally, they take turns talking about each sound they noticed during that minute.

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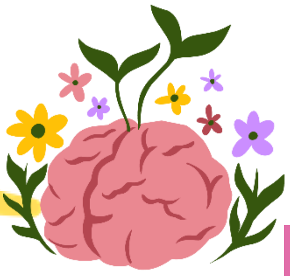
SOCIAL AWARENESS



1. Conductor

The teacher asks one pupil to leave the room (or to turn his back to the classmates) and chooses another to be the conductor, who will show how to play various instruments. The other pupils have the task of imitating the conductor who changes the instrument shown every now and then. The task of the pupil who was sent out is to watch the group closely and guess who the conductor of the group is.

2. Who changed places?

The teacher invites the pupils to look at who is sitting where. One pupil leaves the room (or turns his back to the others). The teacher indicates people who change as quietly as possible. The task is to guess which pupils switched places.

3. Who is like me?

The teacher asks the pupils to remember who gives the same answers as they do. The teacher gives the command "to stand up those people who…": have older siblings, like pizza, have a cat, have green eyes, like spinach, have a phone at school, prefer board games to computer games, play basketball, can swim etc.

At the end of the game, the teacher chooses the pupils who are to indicate the people in the class who gave the same answer.

4. Lamp-nose

The teacher asks the pupils to look at him/ her and listen the commands. The teacher will give both verbal instructions (by saying: “nose” or “lamp”) and non-verbal ones (by pointing to his/ her nose or to the ceiling). The task of the pupils is to react appropriately to words, pointing the finger at what the teacher says. At the command "nose", they point to their nose. At the command "lamp", they point to the ceiling. It is important that the participants are constantly looking at the leader. The leader may indicate the same place as the spoken command or a different one. Whoever makes a mistake falls out of the game or takes over the command of the game.

5. Stop-go, up-down changing meanings

The teacher invites the pupils to circle the room. The teacher gives commands and the pupils must react appropriately. There are four phases of the exercise:

- phase I - the command "stop” means stop and the command "go" means go;
- phase II - reversal of meanings: the command "stop" means go and the command "go" means stop;

- phase III - to the reversed meanings of the words "go" and "stop" we introduce the commands "up" - the pupils must jump or raise their hands up, and "down" - the pupils must bend the knees or crouch;
- phase IV - all commands have reversed meanings.

6. Mirror

The teacher invites the pupils to work in pairs. One pupil will be a mirror and the other will be the one looking in this living mirror. The person who looks in the mirror brings to mind an emotion (but does not say it out loud) and asks the mirror: "Mirror, tell me, what is my emotion?". The mirror tries to guess the other's emotions and to show it by gestures, facial expressions or, in case of difficulties, to describe it in words. When the person looking in the mirror feels understood, the pupils change places.

7. Feel my rhythm

This activity is targeted on developing the ability to focus on the other person, on enhancing resonance with the emotional state of the partner and on developing motor expression.

Materials needed: classical music recording, playback equipment.

The teacher invites the pupils to work in pairs and face each other. The teacher turns on the music. One person will make some free moves to the rhythm of the music and the other will try to imitate the movements of the partner as in a mirror image. After a while, the participants switch roles. The game may be repeated by changing the composition of pairs.

After the activity, pupils will be invited to share insights:

- What associations and emotions were evoked in them by the music? Did the partners in the couple had similar feelings?
- How did they feel in the role of the “mirror”, whether it was difficult for them to adapt their movements to the way of expression of their partner?
- Have they noticed changes in their ability to adapt to their partner's rhythm over the duration of the exercise?

8. What he/ she feels?

The teacher shows pupils some pictures with different characters and different emotions. Pupils name the emotions of the characters depicted in the pictures and explain what could have happened before (what caused the situation) and if the emotion is pleasant or unpleasant.

For a higher level of complexity, the teacher may ask the pupils to think about what would have to happen for the person(s) in the picture so that they may feel different.

For a lower level of complexity, the teacher may download graphic representations of several emotions, so that the children may compare them with the expressions of the characters and choose the appropriate one.

9. King Kong’s autograph

The teacher divides the participants into groups (max 8 people). Each group must come up with a person/ character whose autograph they would like to get: King Kong, Johnny Depp etc. Each group chooses three people who will be blindfolded: two of them hold a large sheet of paper vertically and the third person standing in front of them holds the felt-tip pen motionless. The rest of the group must skilfully give commands (up, down, right, left etc.) to the people holding the sheet, so that a signature is created. The group that will do it faster or nicer wins.

Materials needed: sheets of paper, A3 or bigger (one for each group), felt-tip pens, blindfolds.

10. Draw me something

The teacher invites the pupils to wear blindfolds while drawing an object given by the teacher. However, the important thing is that the instruction is written in a specific way: a random order of the components. For instance, the instructions for drawing a horse may be:

- draw the front left leg,
- draw the head,
- draw a tail.

After drawing, the participants will share their works with the group.

An interesting modification of this activity may be to divide the group in pairs and place them back to back: one person gives instructions and the other draws. The effects will be similar. In this way, the teacher will be able to observe the communication while the pupils perform the exercise and discuss it further with them at the end of the activity.

11. Changing the perspective

The teacher gives the pupils a task to observe things around them. If children are reluctant to join this activity and do not know what to do with themselves, a simple task can be given: e.g. they can count how many windows there are in the room or how many people have brown hair. At the teacher's cue - for example, a clap of hands -, the pupils change their perspective: they crouch, lie on their backs and look up, lean forward and look between their legs, climb on a chair and look down on everything, cover one eye, cover one ear etc.

In the next stage of this exercise, the teacher divides the pupils into 2 groups. Groups, taking different perspectives, observe each other; for example, the first group of children stands on chairs, while the second crouches below.

The teacher may then ask the following questions and help children draw conclusions from their observations (also, the teacher should help implement the pupils' ideas together):

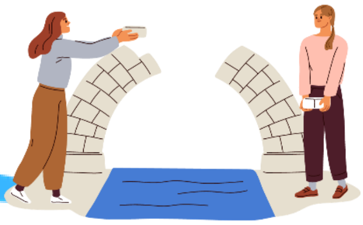
- *What other perspectives would you like to try to look at your surroundings?*
- *What can be seen from a different perspective?*
- *What were you able to observe during play?*
- *What new experiences have you gained in this game?*
- *Did you feel different than usual?*
- *How did you feel when you watched others/ when you were watched?*

12. Introduce your neighbour

The teacher invites the pupils to sit or stand in a circle; they count down to 2 alternatively. The pupils with number 1 rotate to the left while the pupils with number 2 rotate to the right. Then, in pairs, they will talk with each other about themselves for a few minutes. After a few minutes, everyone introduces the person they were talking to.

The game can also be used in a group that knows each other well. In this case, the conversation in pairs may be skipped and everyone introduces their partner as they see fit. The presentation may be diversified with additional instructions for the pupils: e.g. present the good sides of the person they are talking about, talk about the most interesting common experience etc.

RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT



1. Jar of good deeds

The teacher invites each pupil to draw from a jar one piece of paper with an idea to please or do a good thing for another person. The task is to implement this idea within a specific time, agreed together with the teacher (e.g. a day, two days, until the next lesson etc.).

2. Greetings in different ways

The teacher sets a different greeting for each day of the week and the pupils practice it:

- **Monday** - a look in the eyes (in silence)
- **Tuesday** - a nod (in silence)
- **Wednesday** - winking
- **Thursday** - a bow or a word in a different language
- **Friday** - high five

3. Points of contact

The teacher invites the pupils to move freely around the room while music is playing or while the teacher is clapping the rhythm. At the moment when the music stops, the teacher or another designated leader gives the command: e.g. 3 people, 5 points of contact.

The first number always indicates the size of the group in which the pupils should group. The second number indicates how many points of contact should the group as a whole have with the ground. For instance, if a group of 3 people has to have 5 points of contact, one person in the group can stand on one leg and the others stand on both legs.

Points of contact may mean: feet, knees, elbows, hands, fingers - each separately etc.

After checking the correctness of the performed task, pupils start again to move around the room to the rhythm of the music. The designated leader should indicate a different command each time and should aim for larger and larger groups.

4. Bunnies

The teacher invites the pupils to sit in a circle. Starting with the teacher, the group counts down to the last member of the group. Everyone must remember their number. The teacher starts the game: puts his/ her hands to his/ her head and waves them, imitating the movements of the rabbit's ears. Pupils sitting next to the teacher, left and right, will imitate the same movement of the waving ear with one hand - the hand closer to the teacher.

The teacher starts and says: “Bunny number 1 greets bunny number 5.” When called, the bunny number 5 waves "his/ her" ears and says: "Bunny number 5 here. Thank you for the greetings bunny number 1 and greetings to bunny number...” The group must remain alert and attentive to react and wave a single ear when the number of the immediate neighbour is called: for example, if bunny number 5 is called, he/ she will imitate the movements of the ears with two hands, while bunnies with numbers 4 and 6 will imitate the ear waving with the nearest hand to bunny number 5.

5. Tunnel

The teacher invites the pupils to stand in pairs facing each other, in one long row. The partners in the pairs hold hands slightly raised, so that a tunnel forms between the pairs. One person should be left without a pair and should enter one side of the tunnel running towards the opposite end. Before reaching the end, that person is supposed to grab the hand of another person and break the pair, while dragging the person through the tunnel; when they reach the end of the tunnel they will align near the other pairs. The remaining partner should then run on the outside and enter the tunnel grabbing another person's hand and repeating the actions. The more alert the activity, the more focused the participants should be.

6. What am I thinking?

The teacher invites one of the pupils to choose (without saying in a loud voice) an object from the room (e.g. a notebook) and to say: "My item begins with the letter Z." The others have to guess what the object is. If they do not guess in about 1-2 minutes, the pupil will reveal the second letter. After the group guesses the object, another pupil will chose the next item to be guessed.

7. Forehead guess: who/ what am I?

The teacher provides each pupil with a piece of paper with the name of a famous person, a character or even an object. The pupils are not allowed to read those notes! Each player needs to stick the note on their forehead. By asking questions to which the answer is "yes" or "no" to the rest of the participants, the pupils must guess who/ what they are (e.g. "Am I a woman?", "Am I made of wood?" etc.).

Cards or notes with characters/ objects may be prepared in advance or each participant writes down one on a piece of paper and then hands it to the person sitting to the right or all notes can be mixed in a box and each pupil draws one note from it.

Materials: cards, tape, pens.

8. Motto

The teacher asks the pupils to work in pairs. Their task is to find a slogan/ a motto that best describes both of them. Then the pairs are joined in groups of 4, while they need to find now common ground between the previous mottos and find a new one that best describes their group. Then the groups of 4 pupils are joined in groups of 8 and so on. The activity continues in the same way until all small groups have joined in one single big group.

The game can be utilized both as a warm-up for creative activities and as an activity targeted on finding common values among group members. In the latter case, the teacher may observe how pupils talk about their ideas, their will of reaching consensus or their reluctance to let go of their own idea and may point out a few aspects to improve the group dynamics at the end of the exercise (e.g. the need for tolerance and flexibility when we work in a group, the need to listen and respect the others' opinions etc.).

Another variation of this exercise is to use images as a starting point: each pupil will select an image from a pile that best defines him/ her, then in pairs and in the small groups the participants need to find common elements in their pictures, until, in the last phase, they need to come with a title or a definition of the group by reuniting all the common elements they found along the way.

9. What can be done with it?

By using the principle of “brainstorming”, the teacher asks the pupils (either individually or in small groups) to come up with and write down as many uses for a specific object (e.g. book, pencil, eraser, ball, empty food cans, piano etc. - any object might be chosen) as they can find in a limited amount of time (e.g. 5-7 minutes). The teacher should encourage them to think outside the box and find also unusual uses.

The main goal of the exercise is to stimulate creativity and divergent thinking.

10. What if?

The teacher asks the pupils to analyse, individually or in small groups, the consequences of/ what would happen if an extraordinary situation, which is usually the opposite of what is real in everyday life, might occur. The teacher should encourage them to find as many consequences as possible and not dismiss the unusual ideas. Then, they are invited to share their ideas with the group.

Examples of extraordinary situations:

- if shoes had not yet been invented;
- if mankind had no need to sit down;
- if inventions were forbidden;
- if compulsory schooling were abolished;
- if human life expectancy were doubled.

The main goal of the exercise is to stimulate creativity, divergent thinking and flexibility.

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Guidelines for specialists for individual work

7.1. Principles of intervention on small pupils with behavioural problems

More often the specialists are invited to address the behavioural problems of primary school pupils nowadays because there is:

- an increased frequency of maladjustment in the family and school;
- an alarming increase of the incidence of bullying cases among primary school pupils;
- a ray of personal and social consequences of deviant behaviour both upon the pupil demonstrating this sort of behaviour, as well as on the community he/ she lives in (e.g. drug consumption, legal offences, an unsafe and aggressive environment).

The specialists' work with regard to behavioural problems is structured in two distinct ***directions***:

a) prevention of deviant behaviours;
b) remedy of problematic behaviours.

In order to ensure the effectiveness of psycho-social ***programmes for the prevention and remedy of deviant behaviours***, the specialists need to adhere to a set of ***principles***:

- ✓ prevention and intervention actions must be integrated into a specific and well-defined structure, adapted to the psychological an cultural characteristics of the target group;
- ✓ implementation of the programme should be carried out by a multi-disciplinary team (e.g. psychologist, school counsellor, social worker, teacher, family members etc.) and involve as well participants from power structures, members of the community etc. in order to sustain the actions;
- ✓ the intervention processes must have continuity over time, ensured by the long-term engagement of the family and school;
- ✓ whatever approach to tackling deviant behaviour is chosen, both the beneficiaries and all parts involved in the process should be informed regarding benefits, costs and risks of the intervention.

At the individual level, it should be noted that the success of intervention depends to a large extent on the good therapeutic relation established with the pupil and on the way the specialist interacts with the child. The child needs to be able to trust the expert designated to help him/ her - most of the times the children's opinion on the matter is not relevant, because the parents or the teachers decide for him/ her and assign or chose, according to their own criteria, the expert considered most competent to offer help. In some cases, the specialist automatically becomes a person of trust if he/ she is trusted by the child's family or teachers - because small children tend to rely more on their family or other adults to decide for them. Still, this is not always the case with children demonstrating deviant behaviour, who more often than not have trust issues in their family relationships and, thus, tend to be more suspicious, more reluctant and more withdrawn or even uncooperative in new relationships. Thus, what is required of a specialist is to make extra effort for gaining the trust of such children and to abide by certain ***principles of interaction***:

- ➢ ***confidentiality and asking for permission to share content*** - keeping the privacy of the information obtained from the pupil is not just a moral rule, but also a legal one; still, in the cases of smaller children, who depend on the support of their social environment to develop and change, discussions during the sessions often reveal things that need to be shared with the parents or teachers (e.g. the fears of the child or the way he/ she tends to interpret certain behaviours); in such cases, the specialist must inform the child that these intimate thoughts and emotions must be shared in order for him/ her to feel understood by the others and the pupil can be encouraged to share them on his own terms or can be supported by the specialist voicing that content, but only with his/ her previously obtained permission;

- *accepting attitude* - no matter how young or what behavioural problem recommended him/ her for intervention, the pupil does not want to create difficulties for oneself or the others, it's just that he/ she could not find a better strategy to adapt to his/ her own emotions and context; thus, the specialist needs to avoid supplementary stigmatisation and devaluation and to show kindness, respect, honesty and acceptance; please take note that the attitude of acceptance is towards the person and not towards the behaviours of the pupil;
- *not expecting straight answers and not relying on conversation alone* - the children at this age are not really able to give straight answers to questions referring to what they feel or think, so the ability of the expert to empathize, to "read between the lines" and pick up cues from symbolic behaviours is absolutely necessary in this type of work; use artistic means, play therapy, metaphorical stories or pictures in both the assessment phase and the intervention phase, in order to make sense of what the child is feeling and thinking and to trigger the change you aim for;
- *offer new perspectives , not lectures and labels* - when arriving in the hands of a specialist, the child already knows that he/ she is "different" in the most negative way possible, is already aware that his/ her behaviour is not proper, but he/ she doesn't know how to change that and how to stir his actions in a different direction; please note that deviant behaviour is just the only way the child was able to find in order to cope with his/ her inner and outer context; from this perspective, what is required of an expert is to open the door to new ways of doing things, to new means of expression, to healthier and more functional methods of replenishing the inner void;
- *redefining the problem so it may be solved* - the maladapted child would feel like a problem, because everyone else sees him/ her as being the problem (in the house, in the classroom, on the playground etc.), but a specialist should be able to reframe that and to set achievable and realistic intervention objectives, thus helping the pupil to not feel guilty and helpless and guiding him/ her to functionality and empowerment;
- *awareness of own limitations* - the specialist must be aware of his/her own competences and skills and solicit support from the multidisciplinary team or hand over cases in which the complex nature of the intervention is over his/ her abilities; we cannot know it all, there is no shame in that, but we should also have in mind the best interests of the child.

The measures which may be taken by specialists to prevent and counteract deviant behaviours at a young age may be aimed at the family environment or at the community - represented mainly by the school environment.

The most relevant measures to be taken within the family environment for the prevention and decrease of the children's deviant behaviour are:

- encouraging the parents and family members to spend as much quality time together as possible, as strong family bonds offer the emotional safety that a child so desperately needs in order to feel and act in a balanced and healthy way;
- providing opportunities for intellectual development - stimulation, supervision and control of the individual's intellectual development;
- providing opportunities for emotional development - maintain a stable environment characterized by affection, understanding and protection, but also offer training and stimulation for emotional introspection and development of social skills;
- avoidance of extreme attitudes - hyper-authority or hyper-protection of the pupil are both highly harming for the child's development;
- creation of new exploration and interaction opportunities - support the child's autonomy by encouraging him/ her to play sports, to take the initiative on the playground, to meet new potential friends;
- education by personal example - encouraging parents to provide adaptive

and socially desirable role models for their children;

- educating and preparing parents for the tasks associated with this role - parenting sessions or family psychotherapy sessions are often a good path to reposition relationships in the family and insure a higher functionality of the whole system in order for it to be able to support a better psychological and social adaptation of the child.

The most representative general measures recommended to be taken within the community in order to prevent and fight deviant behaviours of primary school pupils are mostly focused on shaping healthy personal and social attitudes. Those may refer to:

- promotion of rational and balanced nutrition;
- relieving intra-psychic tensions through sporting activities;
- insuring optimal health and hygiene conditions;
- stimulating and optimising healthy interpersonal relationships, by focusing on improving communication;
- sustaining continuous exploration and development of the child's talents and skills;
- adapting to the children's needs instead of demanding them to adapt to the world of adults.

These measures prove to be more efficient if they are conjoint and applied on longer periods of time, including after the remission of the behaviour, so that the behavioural problems are prevented from recurring after a while. In this context, it is necessary to insure the supervision of the child from the first stages of deviant behavioural identification until his/ her complete recovery and social reintegration.

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7.2. Sessions

Introductory Session

INDIVIDUAL SESSION 1

Title/ topic:

- Establish a therapeutic relationship

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- learn about the specialist’s field of activity and how it may be of use to him/ her;
- feel understood, safe and important;
- be capable to reflect upon their own behaviour;
- become more confident that the help he/ she receives is genuine.

Preparation:

- The space of the individual session should be friendly and private.
- The specialist will invite the child to make himself/ herself comfortable and explore the space.
- The specialist will describe his/ her field of activity and will explain how the pupil will benefit from the individual sessions.
- The point of this session is to get to know each other and establish a trustworthy relationship.

Resources:

- a therapeutic story about the usefulness to receive guidance when in need;
- writing paper and instruments to take notes.

Main activity:

- The specialist will begin the session by asking the pupil if anything from the space caught his/ her eye and would like to express an opinion or ask a question about it. The answers from the specialist must be honest and encouraging. If the pupil shies away from choosing any object, the specialist might offer to share some interesting things or might offer to answer questions about himself/ herself.
- The specialist will then explore the hobbies and personality of the child through a series of questions, trying to maintain a parallel between the object that caught the eye of the pupil and his/ her interests, traits, desires etc. (e.g. if the child chose to discuss about a toy or a game, the specialist may ask: *Do you like to play? What is your favourite toy? What/ who do you usually like to play with?*; if the pupil chose to discuss about a personal item or a photo, the specialist might use the opportunity to share a few things about himself/ herself: *I got this from.../ The person in the photo is my dear... Have you received a present that is precious to you?/ Do you have a person who is especially dear to you?*).
- It is very important to listen to what the pupil has to say about anything and to answer to his/ her questions or fears in an honest and reassuring way.
- Towards the end of the session, the specialist will introduce a therapeutic story about the importance of guidance when in need and will ask the pupil to write down/ share what crosses his/ her mind while he/ she hears it. The meaning of the story is not to be discussed at this point.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- The pupil may take away with him/ her notes which he/ she made while hearing the metaphorical story.
- According to the input from this session, the specialist will offer one of the two options: (a) until the next time they meet, the child must create a poster (a drawing/ a collage/ even a digital representation if suitable) with his/ her impressions of this first meeting and include some desires regarding the next meeting or (b) the child will be challenged in a playful manner to absolutely not give another thought at the story he/ she heard during the session (paradoxical prescription).

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SELF-AWARENESS

INDIVIDUAL SESSION 2

Title/ topic:

- “The world a emotions” - the palette of human emotions

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- explore the world of emotions;
- develop their abilities to identify emotions;
- learn about the situations in which they most often feel a particular emotion.

Preparation:

- The specialist greets the child and asks him/ her how he/ she feels. Possible questions to use: *How was your day? How are you feeling? What happened today or this week that made you happy? What happened today or this week that made you sad? What happened today or this week that upset you?* The expert tailors the questions to the child and may ask about different emotions.

Resources:

- worksheet "The world of emotions" (see annex at page 56);
- writing/ drawing paper, colouring pens/ felt-tip pens.

Main activity:

- The specialist introduces the child to the topic and goals of today's meeting.
- The activity starts with the worksheet "World of emotions". The child is invited to draw/ write (alone or with the help of the educator) a different emotion he/ she knows on each planet. The experts will offer support by listing other emotions that the child did not think of, but needs to make sure that the child knows and understands each emotion. Different colours may be associated with each emotions/ planet.
- After the worksheet has been completed, the specialist summarises the task: *There are many emotions that we feel. Some are bigger than others, while others are quite tiny just like planets, each different, but all have their place in the cosmos, just like each emotion has a place in our lives.*
- The expert asks the child to mark with a circle on the worksheets those planets corresponding to emotions that he/ she feels most often. Based on the emotions marked by the child, the specialist will lead the rest of the activity.
- The specialist chooses one of the emotions circled by the child and asks him/ her to draw the emotion on a blank sheet of paper. Then, next to the drawing of the emotion, the child has to draw/ write (on his/ her own or with the help of the expert) the situation/ behaviour which triggers the emotion. If necessary, the expert helps the child to find these situations by asking guiding questions: *Do you feel angry when people are unkind to you? Are you afraid of the dark? Do you enjoy playing with your friends?* These questions aim to find together with the child as many situations as possible, so that a common trigger may be identified for each emotion.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- Summary of the session. The specialist asks questions about the child's reflections after the activity e.g. *How did you like today's activity and why? What new things did you learn? What was difficult for you? What did you find particularly interesting? What made you particularly curious?*

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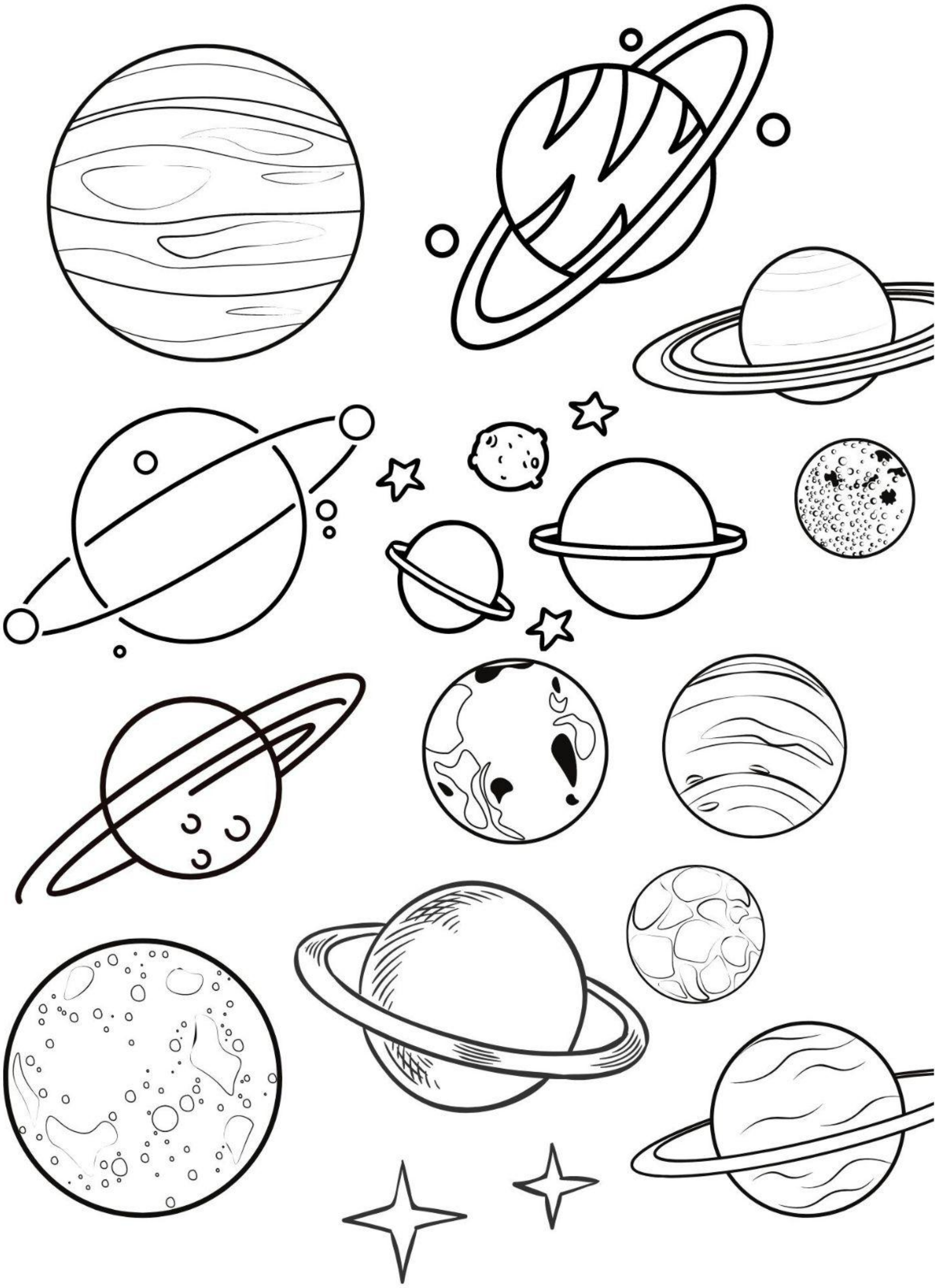
THE WORLD OF EMOTIONS



INDIVIDUAL SESSION 3

Title/ topic:

- “Where do my emotions live?”

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- develop the ability to recognise in oneself the 6 basic emotions: anger, fear, joy, sadness, disgust, surprise by the facial expression, gestures, posture, body position.
- learn about the somatic, cognitive and behavioural symptoms accompanying anger, anxiety, sadness, joy, disgust and surprise.

Preparation:

- The specialist greets the child and asks him/ her how he/ she feels. Possible questions to use: *How was your day? How are you feeling? What happened today or this week that made you happy? What happened today or this week that made you sad? What happened today or this week that upset you?* The expert tailors the questions to the child and may ask about different emotions.

Resources:

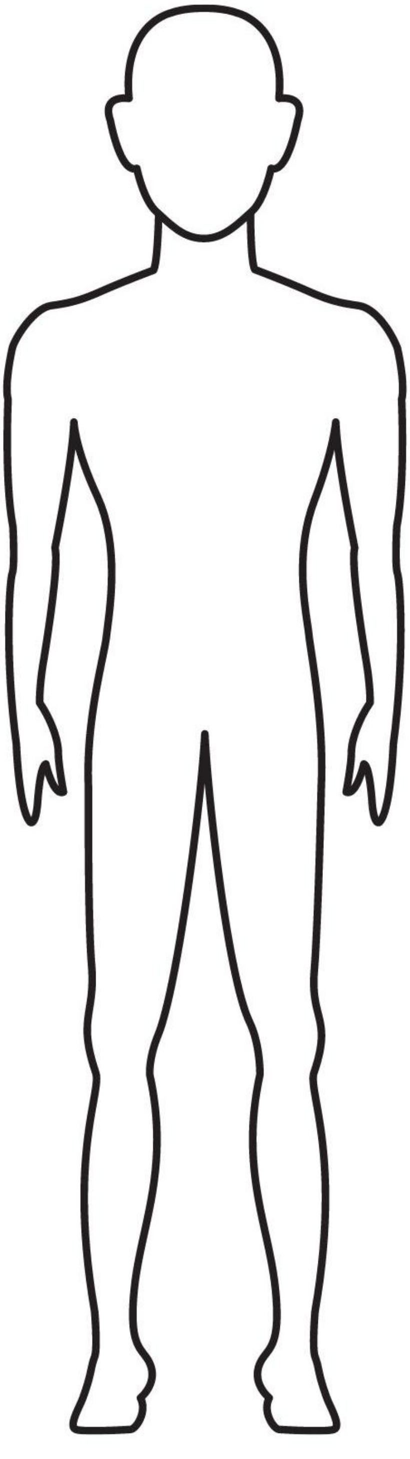
- 6 worksheets with human outline (see annex at page 58).
- 6 printable learning resources (one for each emotion): "What do I look like when...?” (see annexes at pages 59-64);
- crayons/ markers.

Main activity:

- The specialist introduces the topic and objectives of today's meeting to the child.
- The activity starts with focusing on the emotion joy. The specialist asks the child to recall a situation (or several) in which he/ she felt happy. The expert may refer to the emotions and situations discussed in the previous session, in the worksheet “World of emotions”. Once the child recalls such a situation, the specialist asks him/ her to close his/ her eyes (if he/ she wants to) and recall how did he/ she feel that joy, how was the body happy at the time, where in the body did he/ she felt the happiness.
- Now the expert hands the child a worksheet with a human outline on which the child, alone or together with the specialist, marks the places where he/ she feels joy in his/ her body (he may draw/ write/ colour etc.)
- The expert then shows the child the worksheets "What do I look like when I am happy?" and compares with the child the symptoms which have appeared on both. The other symptoms that the child did not list on his/ her worksheets may also be discussed, in order to ascertain whether the child is aware that this is how joy can express itself in the body. If the child recognizes the given symptom in himself/ herself, he/ she marks it on the body outline.
- The specialist repeats the exercise in the same way for the other emotions: sadness, anger, fear, surprise and disgust using the appropriate worksheets.

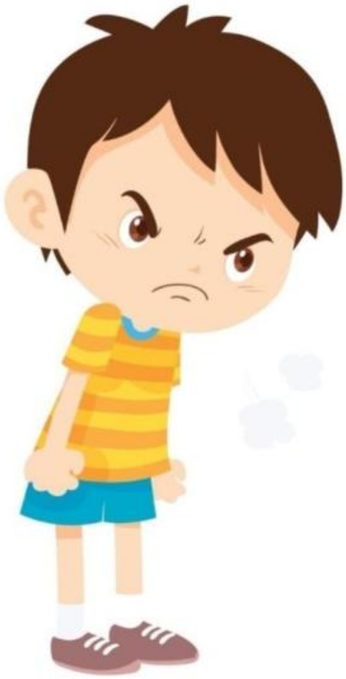
Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- Summary of the activity. The specialist asks questions about the child's reflections after the activity e.g. *How did you enjoy today's activity and why? What new things did you learn? What was difficult for you? What made you particularly curious?*



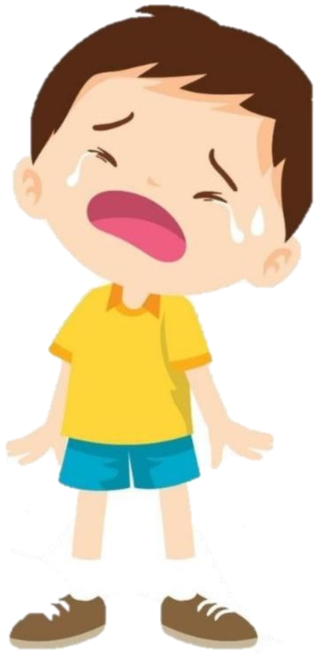
What do I look like when I am angry?

- I clench my fists
- I sweat
- I feel hot
- I shake all over
- My heart beats fast
- I cannot sit still
- I have a stomach ache
- I turn red
- I feel agitated
- I clench my teeth
- I have a headache
- I cannot think clearly
- I stomp my feet



What do I look like when I am sad?

- I do not feel like doing anything
- I do not say much
- I find it hard to swallow
- I feel tired
- I move slowly
- I feel weak in the knees
- I find nothing interesting
- I lose my appetite
- I cry
- I do not smile
- I feel depressed
- I avoid looking at others
- I shiver when I cry

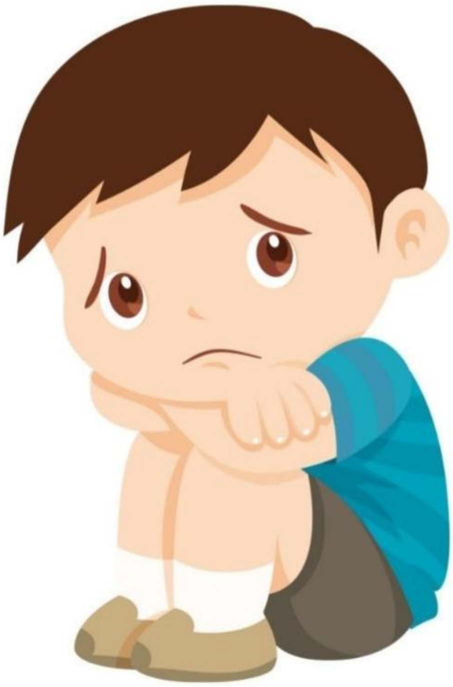


What do I look like when I am joyful?

- I say nice words
- I think clearly
- My body is relaxed
- My eyes are wide open
- I have plenty of energy
- I smile and laugh
- I want to play
- I feel excited
- I scream with joy
- I talk a lot
- I use a lot of hand gestures
- I move fast

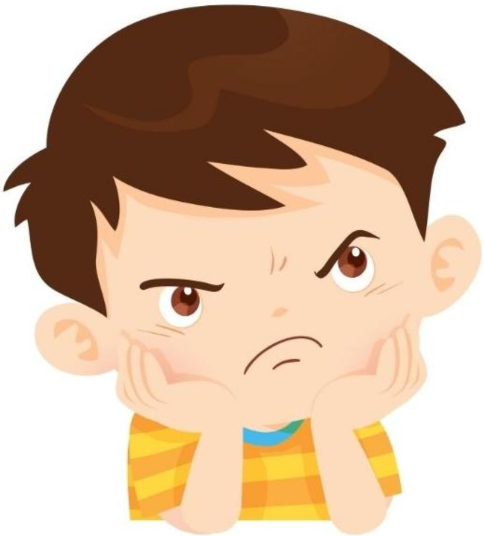
What do I look like when I am afraid?

- I am weak in the knees
- I have difficulty breathing
- I have a lump in my throat
- I have shaking voice
- My heart aches
- My mouth is dry
- My eyes are wide open
- I cannot speak
- I feel sick
- My hair bristles
- My heart is pounding
- I want to hide
- I sweat



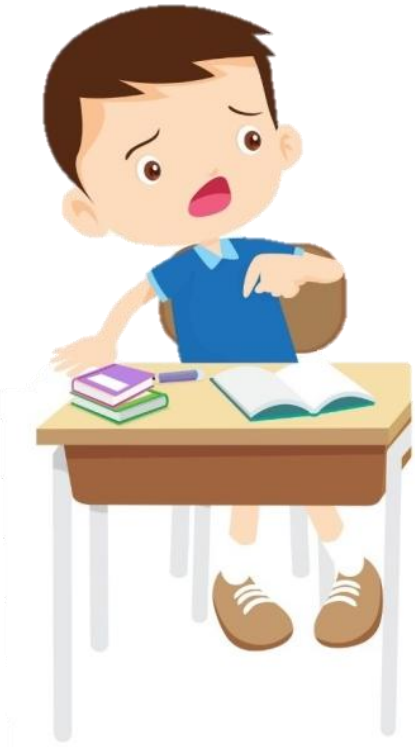
What do I look like when I am disgusted?

- I have a sour face
- I am dissatisfied
- I frown
- I stick out my tongue
- I do not feel like doing anything
- I have shivers
- I do not want to talk about it
- I sweat
- I clench my fists
- I do not want to touch anything
- I do not want to be touched



What do I look like when I am surprised?

- My eyes are wide open
- My mouth is often open
- I have shivers
- I am pale
- I do not know what to do
- I do not know what to say
- I sometimes want to hide
- I raise my arms



INDIVIDUAL SESSION 4

Title/ topic:

- Pleasant emotions

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- be able to recognize pleasant emotions;
- identify the pleasant emotions that most often accompany them.

Preparation:

- The specialist greets the child and asks him/ her how he/ she feels. Possible questions to use: *How was your day? How are you feeling? What happened today or this week that made you happy? What happened today or this week that made you sad? What happened today or this week that upset you?* The expert tailors the questions to the child and may ask about different emotions, but maintaining the focus on the positive emotions.

Resources:

- worksheet "My pleasant emotion is..." (see annex at page 66);
- writing/ drawing paper;
- coloured pencils, markers/ pens.

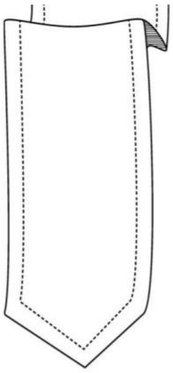
Main activity:

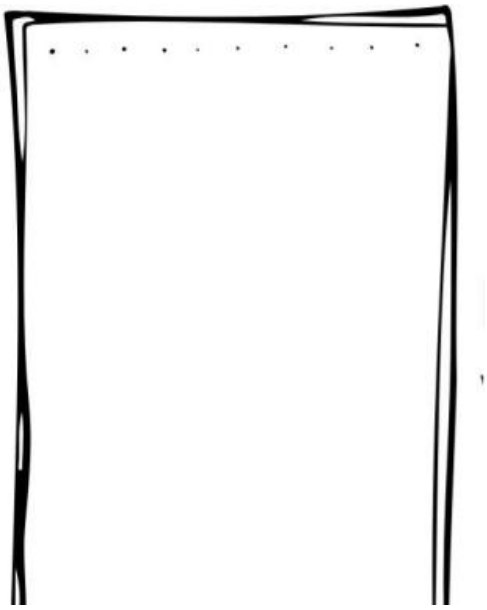
- The specialist introduces the child to the topic and objectives of today's meeting.
- The activity starts by giving the child a blank sheet of paper and crayons/ felt-tip pens. The child has to draw/ write down (alone or with the help of the educator) all the pleasant emotions he/ she knows. The expert completes the child's work with the pleasant emotions not yet mentioned, making sure that they are known and understood (e.g. joy, happiness, gratitude, pride, delight, satisfaction, relief, kindness, relaxation etc.).
- The specialist points out that our emotions are usually triggered by some situation. The expert asks the child to close his/ her eyes and recall a situation (or several) from the last week that was pleasant for him/ her. The child then marks on his/ her paper the pleasant emotions he/ she felt during the recalled situations.
- The specialist hands the child the worksheets "My pleasant emotion is...". At the very top of the worksheet (in the space provided), the expert writes one of the pleasant emotions the child has just marked. Then the child fills in the worksheet according to the instructions given on it (if necessary, the educator helps to read the instructions). The child can draw or write down his/ her answers (alone or with the help of the educator). When completed, the educator briefly summarizes what he/ she sees on the worksheet.
- The exercise is repeated for each emotion previously marked by the child. For each exercise a blank worksheet will be used. If the child only marks one emotion, the expert may also propose to discuss about one or several of the remaining emotions.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

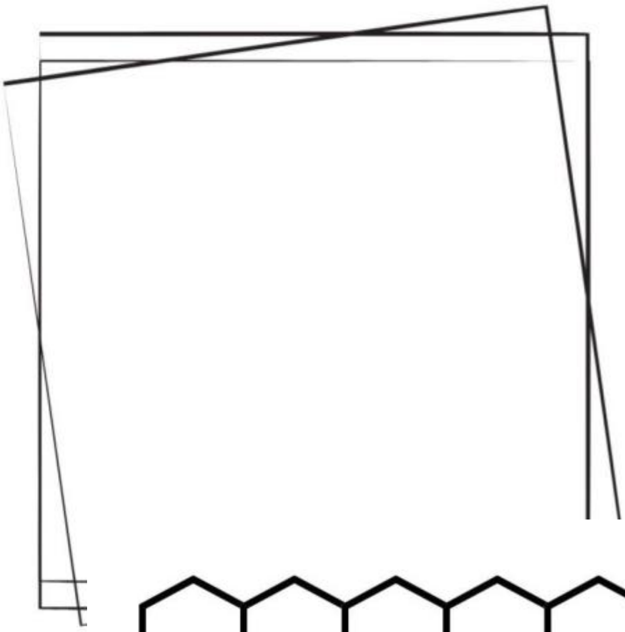
- Summary of the activity. The specialist asks questions about the child's reflections after the activity e.g. *How did you enjoy today's activity and why? What new things did you learn? What was difficult for you? What did you find particularly interesting?*

MY PLEASANT EMOTION IS

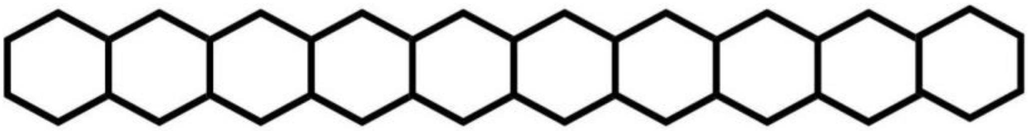




Draw/ write down what evoked this emotion



Draw/ write down what you did then?



How often do you feel this emotion? Colour the tiles

INDIVIDUAL SESSION 5

Title/ topic:

- Unpleasant emotions

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- be able to recognize unpleasant emotions;
- identify the unpleasant emotions that most often accompany them.

Preparation:

- The specialist greets the child and asks him/ her how he/ she feels. Possible questions to use: *What happened today or this week that irritated you?, What happened today or this week that you are ashamed of?, What has happened today or this week that made you sad?* The expert adapts the questions to the child and can ask about different emotions, but maintaining the focus on the negative emotions.

Resources:

- worksheet "My unpleasant emotion is..." (see annex at page 68);
- writing/ drawing paper;
- coloured pencils, markers/ pens.

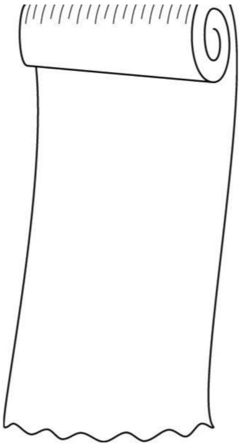
Main activity:

- The specialist introduces the topic and goals of today's meeting to the child.
- The activity starts by giving the child a blank sheet of paper and crayons/ felt-tip pens. The child has to draw/ write down (alone or with the help of the trainer) all the unpleasant emotions he/ she knows. The expert completes the child's work with the unpleasant emotions not yet mentioned, making sure that they are known and understood (e.g. anger, rage, jealousy, shame, guilt, longing, aversion, nervousness, helplessness, grief, fear, worry etc.).
- The specialist points out that our emotions are usually triggered by some situation. The expert asks the child to close his/ her eyes and recall a situation (or several) from the last week that was unpleasant for him/ her. The child then marks on his/ her paper the unpleasant emotions he/ she felt during the recalled situations.
- The specialist hands the child the worksheet "My unpleasant emotion is...". At the very top of the worksheet (in the space provided) the expert writes one of the unpleasant emotions the child has just marked. Then the child fills in the worksheet according to the instructions given on it (if necessary, the specialist helps to read the instructions). The child can draw or write down his/ her answers (alone or with the help of the educator). When completed, the expert briefly summarizes what he/ she sees on the worksheet.
- The exercise is repeated for each emotion previously marked by the child. For each exercise a blank worksheet will be used. If the child only marks one emotion, the expert may also propose to discuss about one or several of the remaining emotions.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

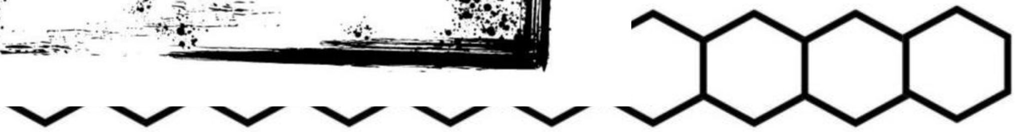
- Summary of the activity. The specialist asks questions about the child's reflections after the activity e.g. *How did you like today's activity and why? What new things did you learn? What was difficult for you? What did you find particularly interesting?*

MY UNPLEASANT EMOTION IS



Draw/ write down what evoked this emotion

Draw/ write down what you did then?



How often do you feel this emotion? Colour the tiles

SELF-MANAGEMENT

INDIVIDUAL SESSION 6

Title/ topic:

- “What makes my heart full?” - identifying pleasant emotions linked with activities/ things/ hobbies

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- review what they learnt about pleasant emotions;
- identify the activities that make them happy/ joyous/ excited etc.;
- learn about the way they express themselves when feeling pleasant emotions.

Preparation:

- The specialist greets the child and asks him/ her how he/ she feels. Possible questions to use: *How was your day? How do you feel today? What happened today or this week that made you happy? What happened today or this week that made you sad? What has happened today or this week that has upset you?* The specialist adapts the questions to the child and asks about different emotions.

Resources:

- worksheet (several copies) “Puzzle heart” (see annex at page 71);
- A4 sheets;
- pens/ pencils/ markers;
- glue.

Main activity:

- The specialist introduces the topic and objectives of today's meeting to the child, explaining that, although it is easier to get stuck on the unpleasant emotions, it is important to recognize the pleasant ones as well, in order to have a more balanced life.
- The activity starts with the worksheet "Puzzle heart". The child is given the (cut) puzzle pieces of the heart and the expert asks him/ her to think about all the things that make him/ her happy/ excited/ joyful etc. The specialist can use some prompts such as friends or family, pets, sports or hobbies, food, music, games to help the child identify these situations easier. The child then draws/ writes down in the puzzle pieces the things that he/ she has identified and proceeds to glue the heart back together (if the child can identify many pleasant things, multiple hearts can be used).
- After piecing the heart back together, the specialist asks the child how he/ she feels when he/ she is doing these things and how it expresses his/ her happiness. Questions that can be used: *How does your face look like when you are doing these things? How does your body feel? Where in your body do you feel the happiness? How do you express your happiness? (e.g. jump, laugh, hug etc.) How do you feel afterwards, when the pleasant activity has ended?*
- The specialist then asks the child to pick his/ her most favourite thing/ activity out of the ones identified and initiates a discussion about it. If previously the child has written on the puzzle pieces, he/ she may be invited to draw this activity. The expert

can use questions similar with the ones above, but also: *Why is this your most favourite thing/ activity? What do you feel when you are doing it? Are there other people involved in this or do you prefer doing it alone? How often do you do it? How would you feel if you had to stop doing it?*

- After these activities have been completed, the specialist may suggest to the child to take the worksheets, drawings at home and place them somewhere where he/ she may see them, so that he/ she remembers the pleasant feelings these things elicit.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- Summary of the activity. The specialist asks questions about the child's reflections after the activity e.g. *How did you like today's activity and why? What new things did you learn? What was difficult for you? What did you find particularly interesting?*

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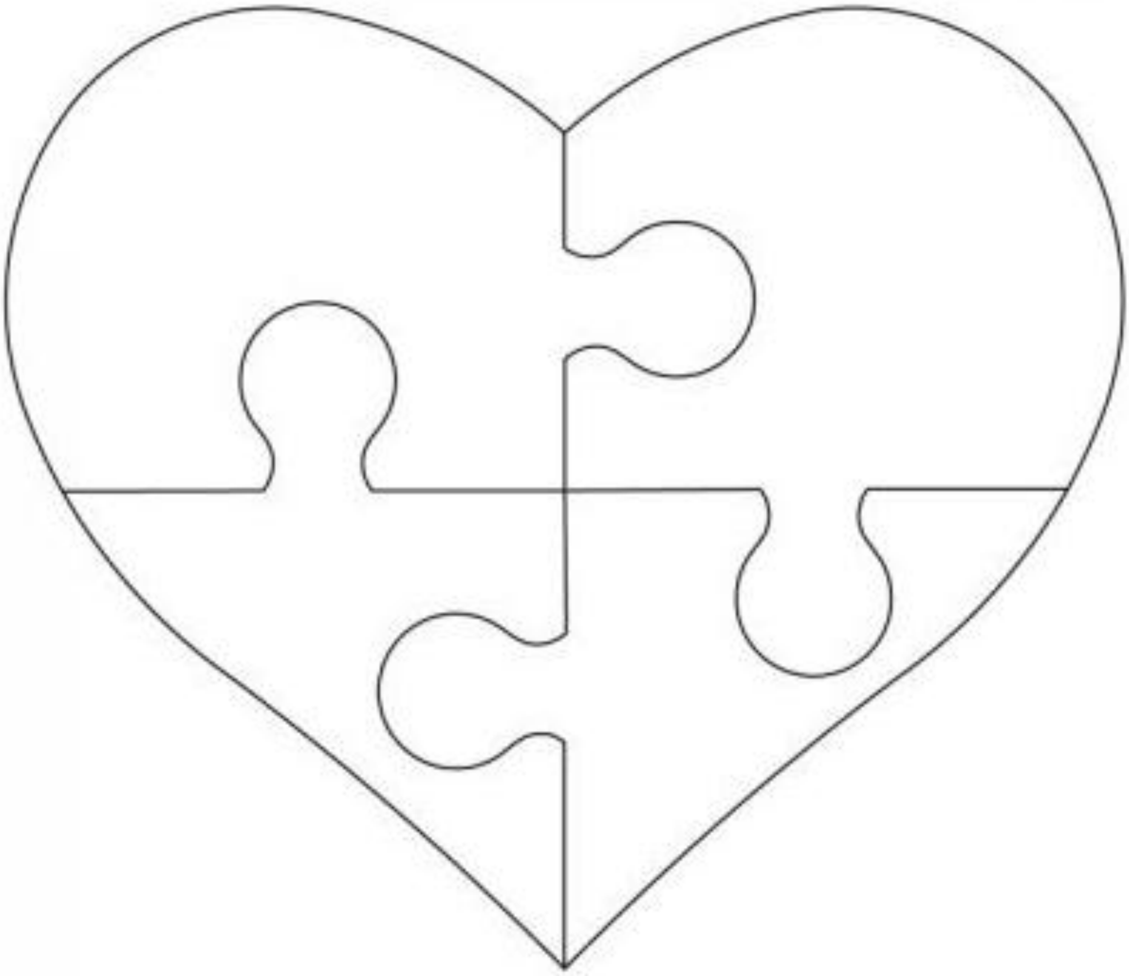
PUZZLE HEART



INDIVIDUAL SESSION 7

Title/ topic:

- "Sometimes I could explode!" - learning how to recognize and manage anger

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- recognize situations that cause anger or frustration;
- learn about how to calm themselves when feeling angry.

Preparation:

- The specialist greets the child and asks him/ her how he/ she feels. Possible questions to use: *How was your day? How do you feel? What happened today/ this week that made you happy/ sad/ angry etc.? How did you handle it? What could you have made differently?* The expert adapts the questions, asking about different emotions and behaviours.

Resources:

- worksheet "My anger thermometer" (see annex at page 73);
- pens/ pencils/ markers.

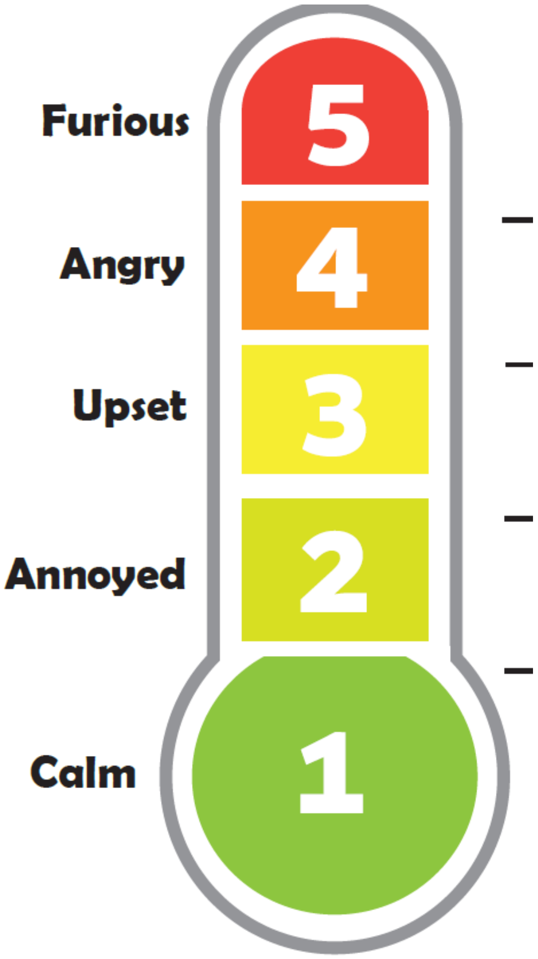
Main activity:

- The specialist introduces the topic and objectives of today's meeting to the child, by saying: "*Everyone feels angry sometimes and it can be a difficult emotion. Like other emotions, anger comes in different degrees: from being slightly annoyed with something to boiling with anger. It's good to notice when we get angry, in order to do something about it and not hurt others. For instance, I got angry this week, because...* (the expert may share an anger-triggering situation from personal experience and how he/ she handled it)".
- Then, the specialist presents the child with the worksheet "My anger thermometer", in which there are different "degrees" to this emotion, from feeling calm to furious. The specialist explains that emotions may have different intensities, just like shown on a thermometer: sometimes one may be at a low temperature, feeling calm or a little annoyed and other times one may be at a high temperature, feeling furious. Then, for each temperature of anger, the child is encouraged to think of a situation he/ she felt or still feels that way and write it down/ draw it next to the thermometer.
- Next, the child is encouraged to write what he/ she can do to calm down in the previously found anger-triggering situations. The specialist can help the child by providing ideas of calming down techniques, if the child has difficulty in finding any.
- After the exercise is completed, the specialist discusses with the child about the anger-triggering situations and the calming techniques identified. It is important that the specialist does not dismiss the child's emotions, so that he/ she understands that anger is a normal emotion which can be healthily expressed and managed.
- Before the session ends, the specialist discusses some self-regulating techniques that the child can use when feeling the anger rising, such as removing oneself from the situation and taking time out to calm down, doing an activity that makes him/ her happy (discussed in the previous session), talking to someone he/ she trusts, doing some form of physical exercise or sport etc.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- Summary of the activity. The specialist asks the child to reflect on the session: e.g. *How did you like today's activity and why? What new things did you learn? What was difficult for you? What did you find particularly interesting? What will you do differently from now on?*

MY ANGER THERMOMETER


Furious
5
Angry
4
Upset
3
Annoyed
2
Calm
1

What makes me feel this way?	What helps me calm down?

INDIVIDUAL SESSION 8

Title/ topic:

- "Can I control myself?" - learning about the importance of impulse control

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- learn about ways to control their impulses;
- shape their ability to control their impulses.

Preparation:

- The specialist greets the child and asks him/ her how he/ she feels. Possible questions to use: *How was your day? How do you feel? What happened today/ this week that made you happy/ sad/ angry etc.? How did you handle it? Do you think you could have done something different?* The expert adapts the questions to the child and checks if there are any different behaviours pertaining to self-management.

Resources:

- worksheet "What should I do?" (see annex at page 75);
- worksheet "Freeze! In the name of self-control" (see annex at page 76);
- pens/ pencils.

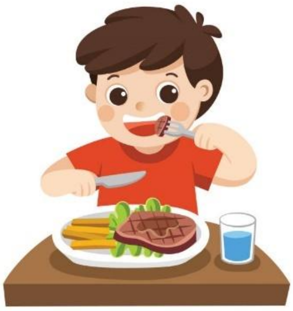
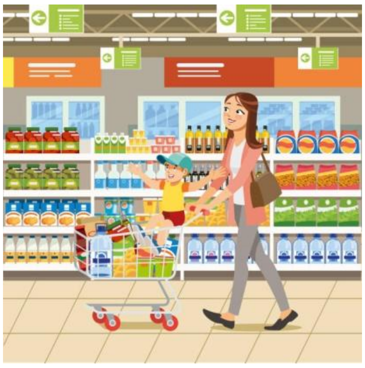
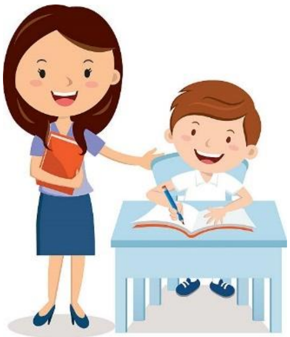
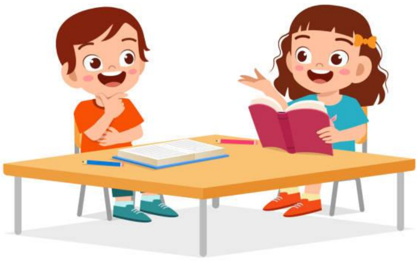
Main activity:

- The specialist introduces the topic and objectives of today's meeting to the child, explaining about the importance of impulse control and the ability to control one's behaviours and manage own feelings.
- The activity starts by giving the child the worksheet "What should I do?" and asking him/ her to select what would he/ she do in different situations. Some answers represent impulsive choices, while others deliberate responses. The expert should then talk with the child about the selected answers, asking him/ her what he/ she thinks the consequences of each different response will be and which option will yield the best consequences and why? The specialist needs to help the child understand that, for example, crying and yelling at his/ her mom to buy the chocolate might make the mom angry or embarrassed in front of other people, whereas accepting that his mom said no will make her appreciate his/ her behaviour. The expert will do the same for the rest of the questions.
- Then, the pupil is presented with the worksheet "Freeze! In the name of self-control". The expert should explain that self-control is like those games where you have to freeze otherwise you lose and that, actually, self-control requires him/ her to "freeze" and think before he/ she acts. Further on, the child is instructed to read the different situations and write down the "Heat" response, where he/ she would act without thinking, impulsively, as well as the "Freeze" response, where he/ she should stop and consider the best choice before reacting. For each of the two responses in each scenario, the expert should discuss possible consequences.
- The specialist may also ask the child to provide his/ her own examples of "Heat" and "Freeze" scenarios and situations from his/ her daily life (e.g. "You want to tell something to your mom, but she is talking on the phone.").

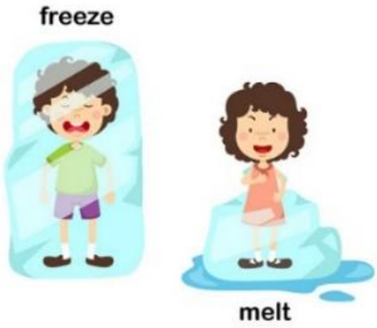
Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- Summary of the activity. The specialist asks questions about the child's reflections after the activity: *How did you like today's activity and why? What new things did you learn? What was difficult for you? What did you find particularly interesting? What will you do differently from now on?*

What should I do?

1. Your mom told you to wait eating until everyone has been served. What should you do?  a. Start eating anyway. b. Complain and tell your mom you are very hungry. c. Wait until everyone has food in their plates.	2. You are at the supermarket with your mom, and you ask her to buy your favourite chocolate, but she says no. What should you do?  a. Cry and yell so that she will buy it. b. Keep asking her nicely to buy it. c. Be ok with not getting the chocolate.
3. Your teacher is helping a classmate, but you also need help. What should you do?  a. Call out to her. b. Wave your hand repeatedly until she comes over. c. Wait until she is finished and then raise your hand.	4. Your desk mate took your pen. What should you do?  a. Grab it back from his/ her hands. b. Start yelling at him/ her to give it back. c. Politely ask for it back.

FREEZE! IN THE NAME OF SELF-CONTROL



1. Your teacher is reading a story and it reminds you of the one that your parents read you last night at home.

HEAT	FREEZE
______________________________	______________________________
______________________________	______________________________
______________________________	______________________________

2. While being in class, you feel that you need to go to the toilet.

HEAT	FREEZE
______________________________	______________________________
______________________________	______________________________
______________________________	______________________________

3. Your teacher introduces a new game to the class and asks if anyone knows its rules.

HEAT	FREEZE
______________________________	______________________________
______________________________	______________________________
______________________________	______________________________

4. You and your friends are being divided into teams to play a game. Other people get picked before you.

HEAT	FREEZE
______________________________	______________________________
______________________________	______________________________
______________________________	______________________________

INDIVIDUAL SESSION 9

Title/ topic:

- "I am worried about everything!" - stress management

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- learning about how to identify things that cause stress and worry;
- be able to apply coping strategies to handle stress and worry.

Preparation:

- The specialist greets the child and asks him/ her how he/ she feels. Possible questions to use: *How was your day? How do you feel? What happened today/ this week that made you happy/ sad/ angry etc.? How did you handle it? Do you think you could have done something different?* The expert adapts the questions to the child and checks for signs of self-management skills in answers.

Resources:

- worksheet "Keep calm and use your senses" (see annex at page 78);
- A4 sheets;
- coloured pencils/ markers/ felt pens.

Main activity:

- The specialist introduces the topic and objectives of the meeting to the child. He/ she then explains to the child that everyone feels stressed and worried about different things from time to time and it is perfectly normal. The expert can also share a personal example of something that stresses/ worries him/ her, while explaining that it is good to know what worries us so we can deal with it and that it is also very helpful to share our worries with others.
- The activity starts by giving the child a blank sheet of paper and coloured pencils/ markers/ pens. The child is asked to draw the outline of a glass on the paper. Then, the child must fill the glass with things that stress/ worry him/ her. How full the glass will be depends on the number of things that the child reports.
- After the child has written down some of his/ her worries, the specialist will discuss those with the child and try to find which of those might seem irrational or unlikely to happen and which are rational and likely. The expert will then lead the child towards coming up with solutions for those worries.
- Then, the specialist will talk about the importance of finding solutions in order to calm down when we are feeling worried, stressed, overwhelmed or frustrated. The expert will hand out the worksheet "Keep calm and use your senses" and explain that when we feel unpleasant, we can rely on our senses to help us calm down. The expert asks the child to fill in the worksheet with something he/ she sees, hears, smells and thinks about that help him/ her calm down. The specialist will explain that the child can do this exercise in his/ her mind the next time he/ she faces a stressful situation in order to keep calm.
- Together with the child, the expert explores other ways of calming down, e.g. doing something that one likes and makes oneself happy (the expert may connect it to the discussions from the previous sessions), imagining one's favourite place, picturing the people one cares about, taking a break etc.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- Summary of the activity. The specialist asks questions about the child's reflections after the activity: *How did you like today's activity and why? What new things did you learn? What was difficult for you? What did you find particularly interesting?*

KEEP CALM AND USE YOUR SENSES

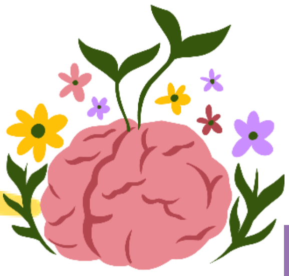
Something that I SEE that helps me calm down:

Something that I HEAR that helps me calm down:

Something that I SMELL that helps me calm down:

Something that I THINK ABOUT that helps me calm down:

SOCIAL AWARENESS



INDIVIDUAL SESSION 10

Title/ topic:

- ”Feeling what I see” - introducing social awareness

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- understand the concept of social awareness;
- understand the concept of empathy.

Preparation:

- The specialist greets the child and asks him/ her how he/ she feels, while shifting the focus on others’ feelings. Possible questions to use: *How was your day? How do you feel? How did others feel in your presence? How did you make others feel? How did others make you feel?* The expert adapts the questions to the child, taking into account all the information gathered so far about him/ her.
- Before overly mentalizing what we see in the behaviours of others and in the relationships of a group, we should try to identify what is happening inside us in relation to our surroundings, so we activate not a cognitive level, but an emotional one: "how would we feel in that situation?" We therefore start to build social awareness, by focusing on empathy.
- The specialist presents the goal of the following cycle of sessions (building social skills), in order to give the child a simple and clear map of the past and future process and empower him/ her to know and manage where he/ she is.
- The space should be set up for a very flexible interactive mode, such as using a low table to do the activities on or having the possibility to rearrange the sitting options.

Resources:

- a map, essential and visual rather than verbal, showing the levels reached by the pupil and the ones still envisioned (the specialist may choose an appropriate metaphor in order to make things intelligible for the child and facilitate a sense of internal consistency: e.g. a journey between islands);
- a group of characters: they can be stuffed animals, Barbie dolls, action figures, Legos, in a sufficient number to simulate pair or small-group dynamics, 3-5 components.
- 5 pictures of faces expressing the 5 basic emotions (Ekman's model): joy, fear, anger, disgust, sadness (they can also be represented by characters from the movie *Inside-out*, for which Ekman was a consultant, or emoticons).

Main activity:

- The expert introduces the concepts of social awareness (*How is my friend feeling? How are my friends doing?*) and empathy (*How would I feel in that situation?*) with the help of a visual map/ metaphor.
- The specialist introduces some stimulus situations with the use of storytelling and the characters prepared ahead, which are presented exclusively at that moment and

were not visible before in the room. The characters could be presented by their name or the child could be asked to name them.

- The expert will then present in the same way the 5 cards with basic emotions.
- Two or three situations are narrated, characterized precisely by one of these emotions, as similar as possible to the child's context (e.g. school, the sport he/ she practices, a birthday party, even a family situation may be suitable, especially for smaller children). For example, using characters, the expert can simulate or narrate about a party where all children, except one, were playing ball and, at some point, the child who didn't want to play hid the ball. The child may be invited to participate and add details to the story.
- At a point in which the child seems fully engaged in the storytelling, the specialist will bring up the following questions: *How does that child feel? How would you feel at that moment? How come? What do you think he/ she thought? What did he/ she want? How would you like to feel? What would you like to have happen?*
- The discussion will be accompanied with the use of emotion cards, or at least they should be kept visible at hand.
- The expert simulates possible behaviours and interactions with the help of the chosen characters and inserts first-person communication.
- At the right time, with a few words, particularly using the child's own words, the specialist encapsulates and makes explicit the meaning of social awareness and empathy.
- The expert facilitates at the end of the story a possible co-constructed solution with the child where there is a situation of satisfaction and conclusion of events.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- The specialist can use exit/ flash cards (a gamification method of reflecting on an experience which may be purchased or custom made) to conclude the session by asking the child to share thoughts and feelings about the experience during the session:
    - A new word you learned.
    - The most difficult moment.
    - One thing you are trying to figure out.
    - The funniest moment.
    - How you feel right now.
    - A sound that represents what the experience together was like.
    - Make a statue that represents what the experience together was like.
- Whether it's a card, a game or a direct request, the expert should offer the child the opportunity to give feedback.

INDIVIDUAL SESSION 11

Title/ topic:

- Recognizing the differences between emotions

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- recognize different levels of emotional expression (face, posture and voice).

Preparation:

- The specialist greets the child and asks him/ her how he/ she feels, while shifting the focus on others' feelings. Possible questions to use: *How was your day? How do you feel? How did others feel in your presence? How did you make others feel? How did* *others make you feel?* The expert adapts the questions to the child, taking into account all the information gathered so far about him/ her.

- There will be three levels of emotional expression that the session will focus on:
  - *face:* the main shapes that can be traced (mouth and eyebrow line) using a stylized face to move the lines.
  - *posture:* identification of physical macrostructures (macro signals of readiness/ rejection and tension/ relaxation) through simulation activities with one's own body.
  - *voice:* recognition of Ekman's main emotion-related intonations through simulation activities with eyes closed and use of voice.
- Three phases need to be prepared for the work on the face:
  - first stage with emoticons representing simple emotions, such as the fundamentals according to Ekman, 6 cards with emoticons.
  - second phase with a white sheet with printed/ drawn eyes and cut out cards that can be moved and placed on the sheet. The cards should be: two straight lines representing eyebrows and one curved line, in the shape of an arc, representing the mouth.
  - third phase with photos of children's faces feeling emotions (there are many on the web), including the basic ones but also mixed and more sophisticated emotions.
- For work on posture the specialist may reuse the emoticons or photos of the children.
- For voice work, no materials are needed or the photos of the children's faces may be reused.

Resources:

- 6 cards with emoticons (see the annex at page 83);
- sheets with printed/ drawn eyes and cut-out cards with eyebrows and mouths;
- photos of children's faces feeling emotions.

Main activity:

- The expert introduces the work of the session by presenting in a few clear words the work on three aspects of emotion recognition. Also he/ she offers a space for questions or sharing about the previous meeting.
- Part 1: Emotions through the face. The specialist explains how this game works and why: *Discover the emotions by looking at the face expressions and imagine how it feels.* Using the materials described above and in the agreed order, the expert starts by presenting emoticons and playing "guessing how you feel" with the face in that expression, trying to mimic it. It is important to bring attention to two details, the shape of the eyebrows and mouth, and to study the differences on the image and one's own face as one mimics it.
- Second stage of the exercise: the specialist demonstrates how to play with the cards and comments on the effects and changes of the face transforming on the sheet of paper. The expert will try to keep a good pace by following the child's willingness and attention.
- The third phase of the exercise is represented by showing the pictures with the children feeling different emotions and asking the child to imagine what are the children in the pictures saying or thinking at that moment.
- Part 2: Emotions through the whole body. In this case the specialist reuses the emoticons and then, in a more complex way, the photos, to ask the child to play with the body for impersonating statues representing an emotion, the guiding questions are: *What would the body position of this face expression look like? How would he/ she walk?*
- After experimenting by playing, the specialist invites the child to return to some postures by exploring how the body is: *Which part of the body is tense and which is*

relaxed? The example of an open hand or a closed hand may be given in order to differentiate tension and relaxation. *Describe what the shoulders/ arms are feeling like in that position. What do you need when you are in that situation? Trying to imagine possible outcomes.* ➢ Part 3: Emotions through voice. At this point, the specialist invites the child to sit down again and play with the voice, explaining that now the goal is to try to find out if it is possible to understand emotions with eyes closed. The expert will try together with the child to choose a phrase that he/ she may happen to say to a classmate or teacher or family member: e.g. "Lend me the phone!", "Can I go to the bathroom?" etc. The expert and the child take turns, having their eyes closed, in trying to guess what kind of emotion it may accompany the different sentences or by choosing an emoticon/ photo that best represents the voice.
Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period: ➢ As in the previous session, the specialist offers the child the opportunity to give feedback /share his/ her experience with the help of cards, direct questions or any other toll considered most useful. ➢ Possible assignment for the next session: the specialist asks the child to pay attention to his/ her friends and classmates in the following week in order to identify the emotions they feel, explaining that emotions are like a sea and never stand still, they change often like clothes, but also that sometimes we wear the same clothes for many days. If the child wants, he/ she can share if any friends often make a specific expression with their face or often move or talk in a way that was explored during the session.

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😄	ENJOYMENT
😟	SADNESS
😠	ANGER
😨	FEAR
🤢	DISGUST
😯	SURPRISE

INDIVIDUAL SESSION 12

Title/ topic:

- Naming the differences between emotions with different intensities

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- describe with detail and differentiate the emotions recognized;
- get familiarized with the concept of emotional intensity (high/ low).

Preparation:

- The specialist greets the child and asks him/ her how he/ she feels, while shifting the focus on others' feelings. Possible questions to use: *How was your day? How do you feel? How did others feel in your presence? How did you make others feel? How did others make you feel?* The expert adapts the questions to the child, taking into account all the information gathered so far about him/ her.
- The materials from the previous session (the emoticons) may be reused. Two extra copies for each emoticon should be added.
- Separate cards with emotion names for each emoticon should be prepared. Also, for each emotion, cards with a more intense emotion and a less intense one should be prepared. For example: happiness, as a medium intensity emotion; high intensity enthusiasm and low intensity pleasure. Refer to Ekman's studies and the scientific platform www.atlasofemotions.org.

Resources:

- 2 sets of cards with emoticons and 1 set of cards with emotion names - 3 emotion words for each emoticon corresponding to 3 different emotion intensities.

Main activity:

- The expert introduces the topic, making use of the map previously used. Also he/ she offers space for questions or for sharing thoughts about the previous meeting.
- Part 1: The specialist presents the emoticons and inserts the cards with the names for each emotion, while also describing to the child the particularities of each image. Before moving on to the next step the expert chooses or has the child choose which emotion to start with and clears the table/ the work space of the other images, leaving only the reference emoticon.
- Part 2: The specialist proposes to decrease the intensity of that emotion a bit, as if turning the volume down and have, for example, a "little" happiness, but still happiness. Key questions may be used: *What would happen to the face? To the body? To the voice?* The child may play with these variables and modify the emoticon (one of the copies is used for this), while the expert introduces the lower intensity card describing that emotion previously prepared, for example "pleasure". The modification can be very creative: a particular sign, a change in the position of some element, the insertion of a word.
- The same process will be repeated for increasing the intensity of the emotion, using the second copy of the emoticons and the cards prepared in advance.
- The exercise will be repeated with all the emotions that are most interesting to the child and not necessarily with all the emotions.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- The specialist offers the child the opportunity to give feedback /share his/ her experience in the session.
- A possible assignment for the next session may be to ask the child to observe his/ her friends or classmates in terms of intensity of the emotions they experience.

INDIVIDUAL SESSION 13

Title/ topic:

- Lessons learned - shaping social awareness

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- be able to consolidate their understanding of the concepts and the progress.

Preparation:

- The specialist greets the child and asks him/ her how he/ she feels, while shifting the focus on others' feelings. Possible questions to use: *How was your day? How do you feel? How did others feel in your presence? How did you make others feel? How did others make you feel?* The expert adapts the questions to the child, taking into account all the information gathered so far about him/ her.

Resources:

- cards with emoticons;
- photos of children's faces feeling emotions;
- short animation movies.

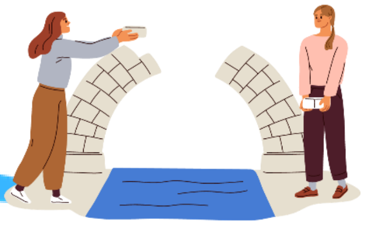
Main activity:

- The expert introduces the topic of the session, making use of the map previously used. Also he/ she offers space for questions or for sharing thoughts about the previous meeting. The specialist may use the guiding question: *What did you learn?*
- To provide the opportunity for the child to focus on what has been done in the previous meetings, the specialist reminds the activities and highlights observations about the pupil: for example, "I saw that you had fun when..." or "this game instead was more difficult and you managed to...."
- The specialist shows the child a short animation movie and asks the child to point out the different emotions demonstrated by the characters in different moments of the story and to offer a grade from 1 to 5 for the intensity of the respective emotion. The child is then asked to argument his/ her answer by pointing out what elements (face, body language, voice) did he/ she analyse which led him/ her to that conclusion.
- The expert, together with the child, review the map previously used and indicate further development objectives that the child may follow in the next period.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- The specialist offers the child the opportunity to give feedback /share his/ her experience in the session and points out the child's progress and the aspects that still need practice.

RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT



INDIVIDUAL SESSION 14

Title/ topic:

- What is relationship management?

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- understand what relationship management is;
- be able to communicate feelings clearly.

Preparation:

- The specialist greets the child and asks him/ her how he/ she feels, while shifting the focus on others' feelings. Possible questions to use: *How was your day? How do you feel? How did others feel in your presence? How did you make others feel? How did others make you feel?* The expert adapts the questions to the child, taking into account all the information gathered so far about him/ her.

Resources:

- worksheet and cards (see the annexes at pages 88-89);
- blank pieces of paper;
- pencils, colouring pencils, rubber, sharpener, eraser, markers;
- internet connection.

Main activity:

- The specialist explains that the topic of the following sessions will be relationship management and asks the pupil what he/ she thinks this means.
- For more detail, the specialist may opt for showing the following video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ELLaMPiPqPM.
- The specialist then proceeds with the activity "The pyramid of values": the pupil is asked to look at the cards containing different values and pick his/ her top six values. *Note:* in his/ her choice, the child should think of who he/ she is as a person and what he/ she wants from others. Then, the child will create the pyramid of values, by organizing his/ her six values according to their importance (the most important one will be on top) and writing them on the pyramid included in the worksheet. The goal is for the pupil to reflect upon his/ her values and communicate them.
- Further on, the specialist provides the child with some scenarios and asks how he/ she would feel in these situations and how would he/ she react, according to the values he/ she has distinguished earlier. Scenarios:
    1. *You have asked your friend to lend you his/ her scissors to do a project but now you don't know where they are.*
    2. *You have got a brand new toy and your friend asks if he/ she can play with it.*
    3. *You're friend has fallen over and hurt his/ her leg. He/ she is crying.*
    4. *Your teacher asks you to solve a very difficult maths problem on the board.*
    5. *Your mum has told you that you're going to your friend's house later today. She has told you the exact time when you'll be leaving your house. You have*

already asked your mum three times if it's time yet. You really want to ask again.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- The specialist asks the pupil what does he/ she think he/ she should do or how could he/ she use the pyramid in his/ her everyday live and relationships.
- The expert asks the pupil to give examples of times when his/ her values were respected and times when they were not. The expert asks him/ her to describe how he/ she felt and what he/ she did in both cases.
- The specialist helps the child realise that his/ her values, who he/ she is as a person and what he/ she needs from others represent the foundation of all relationships.
- Also, the specialist may give the child the following task for the following period: he/ she will have the goal to communicate clearly how he/ she feels and what he/ she needs at least once a day with one person from his/ her family, one classmate/ friend, his/ her teacher. The pupil must share in the following session about three instances in which he/ she communicated clearly how he/ she felt and what he/ she needed according to his/ her values.

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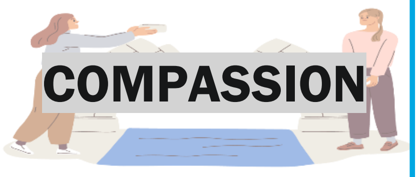
VALUES CARDS

ACCEPTANCE


COMPASSION

COOPERATION

COURAGE

EMPATHY

EQUALITY

GENEROSITY

GRATITUDE

HONESTY

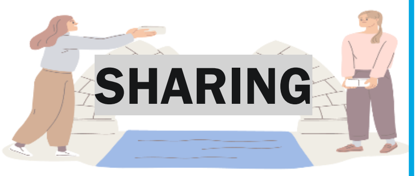
JUSTICE

PERSEVERANCE

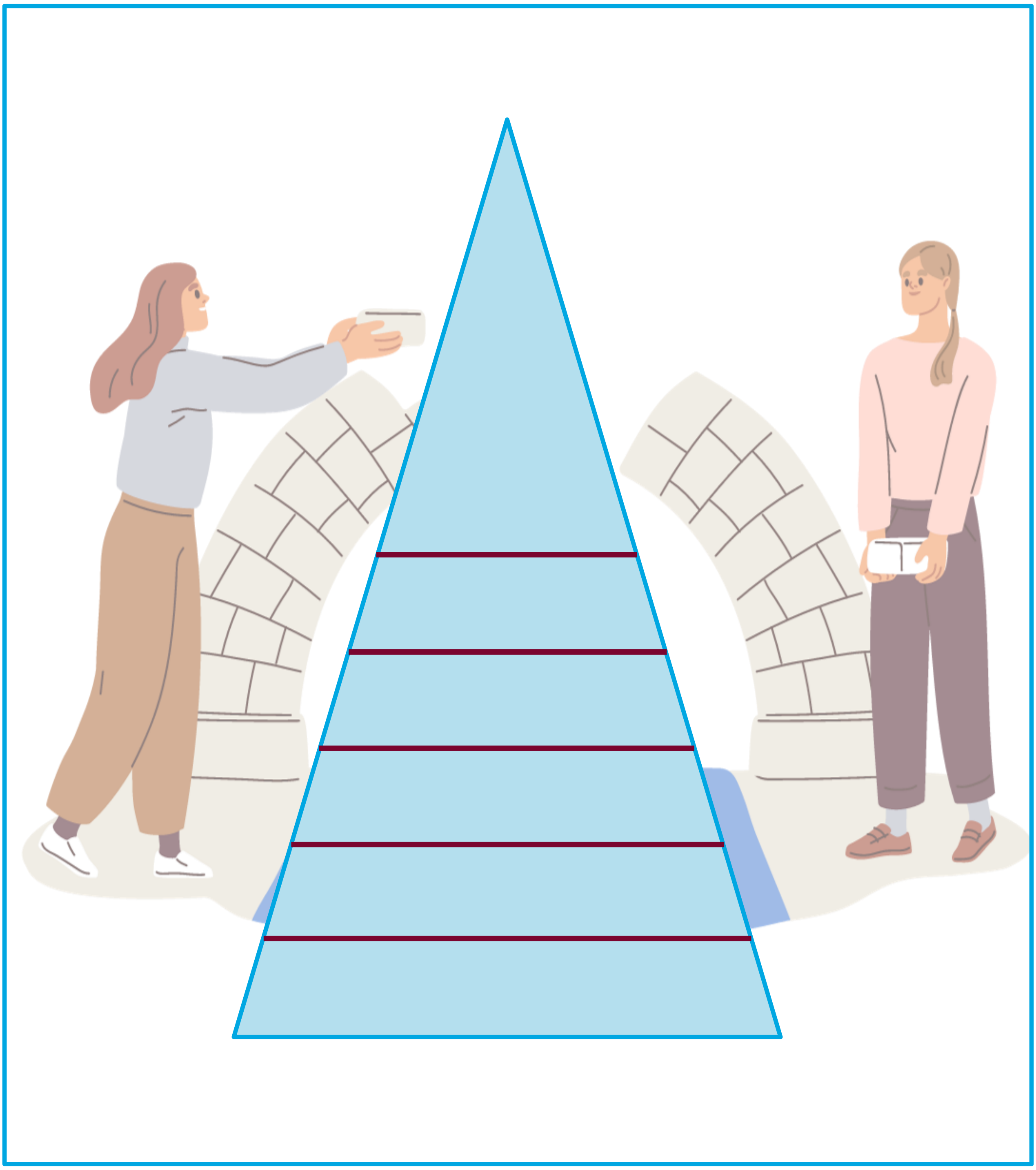
RESPECT

RESPONSIBILITY

SELF-CONTROL


SHARING

MY PYRAMID OF VALUES



INDIVIDUAL SESSION 15

Title/ topic:

- "Let's connect!"

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- be able to recognize and pay attention to other's feelings;
- understand that all emotions are valid and acceptable but not all behaviours are;
- connect with others in ways that help them feel understood and supported.

Preparation:

- The specialist greets the child and asks him/ her how he/ she feels, while shifting the focus on others' feelings. Possible questions to use: *How was your day? How do you feel? How did others feel in your presence? How did you make others feel? How did others make you feel?* The expert adapts the questions to the child, taking into account all the information gathered so far about him/ her.

Resources:

- worksheet and cards (see the annex at page 91);
- blank sheets of paper;
- pencils, colouring pencils, rubber, sharpener, eraser, markers.

Main activity:

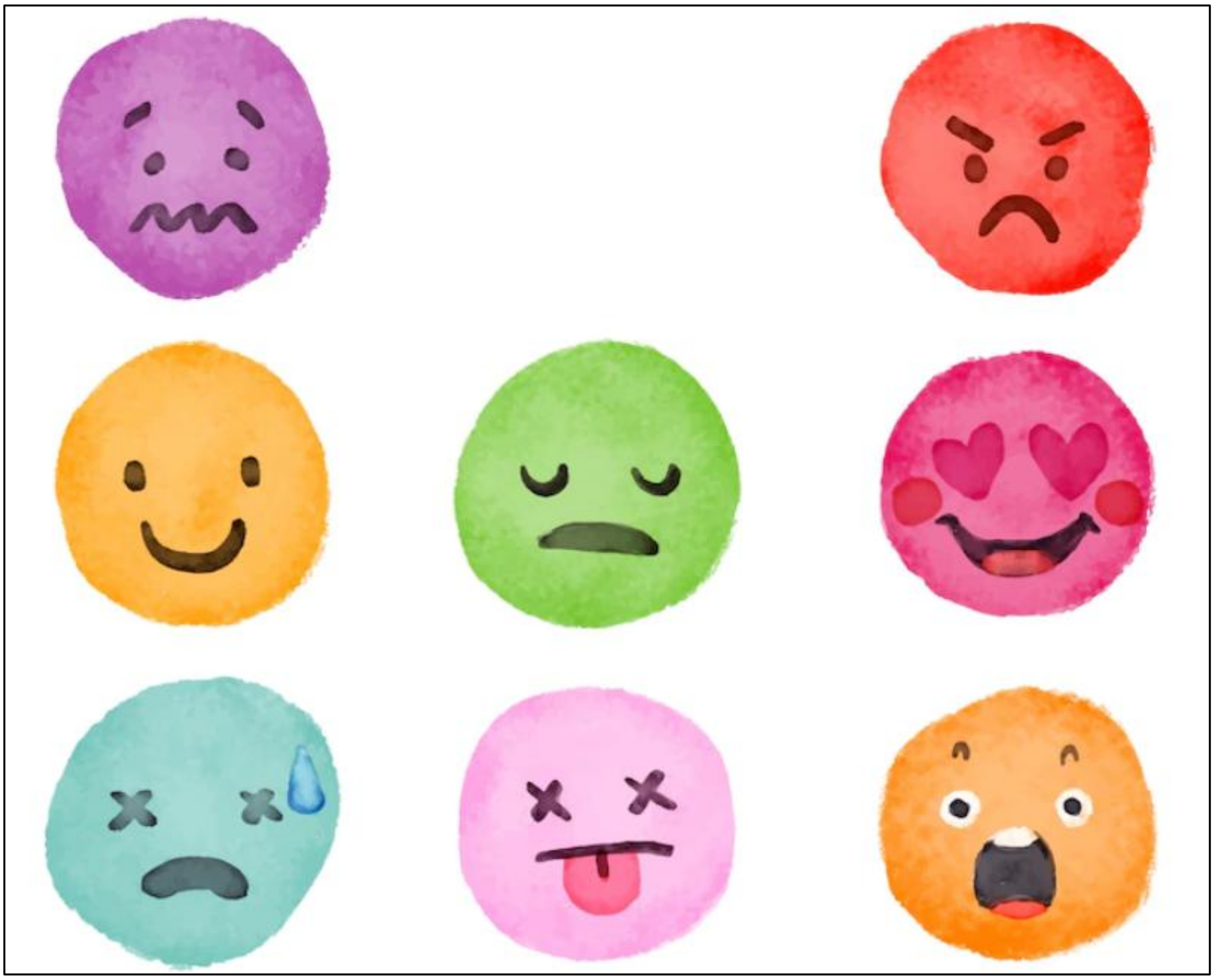
- The specialist shows the cards with emoticons to the pupil and invites him/ her to match the emotion tags with the emoticons. The expert may ask the child to draw a new emoticon and write a tag for it.
- Further on, the expert invites the pupil to use his/ her imagination in order to describe how he/ she would act in certain situations: *Pay attention to others' feelings and act with empathy and compassion but without dishonouring your values.*
- Scenarios:
    1. On an airplane, an old man asks if you will change seats with his wife so they can sit together. You came early to get a window seat and don't like his wife's location. What do you do?
    2. Your friend does not want to play with you and he/ she seems to have some new friends. What do you do?
    3. You realise you have hurt a friend's feelings by sharing his/ her private secrets with another friend. What do you do?
    4. It's break time and a friend of yours has forgotten his/ her lunch box at home. You have yours, but you are really, really hungry. What do you do?
    5. Someone has stolen your friend's pencils and some other kids are saying that you have done it, even though this isn't true. These other kids insist that you are the one who did it. What do you do?

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- The specialist will discuss the answers of the pupil regarding the scenarios and will explain that all emotions are valid and acceptable but not all behaviours are.
- A task for the following week may be given: the expert will set the goal for the pupil to help one person in need (friend, classmate, family member) go through a difficult feeling, either by asking that person if he/ she needs help or directly by doing something nice for him/ her. This task helps the child practice recognizing the others' emotions and connecting with others in ways that help him/ her feel understood and supported.

EMOTICONS AND EMOTION TAGS

ANGER	SADNESS	FEAR
ENJOYMENT	LOVE	SURPRISE
DISGUST	SHAME	



INDIVIDUAL SESSION 16

Title/ topic:

- "Things to say and things not to say" - Healthy boundary setting

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- be able to set boundaries in relationships with others;
- respect and honour those boundaries.

Preparation:

- The specialist greets the child and asks him/ her how he/ she feels, while shifting the focus on others' feelings. Possible questions to use: *How was your day? How do you feel? How did others feel in your presence? How did you make others feel? How did others make you feel?* The expert adapts the questions to the child, taking into account all the information gathered so far about him/ her.

Resources:

- worksheet and cards (see the annexes at pages 93-94);
- blank sheets of paper;
- pencils, colouring pencils, rubber, sharpener, eraser, markers.

Main activity:

- The specialist explains that personal boundaries are the limits and rules we set for ourselves within relationships. A person with healthy boundaries can say "no" to others when he/ she wants to. Boundaries should be based on one's values or the things that are important to each person.
- The expert gives the pupil the cards with "Things to say" and asks him/ her to classify them as:
  1. things to say that help set clear boundaries and
  2. things to say that don't help that much in setting clear boundaries.
- The specialist then presents the pupil with some situations (he may read them out using the "boundary situation cards") that challenge boundaries and asks how he/ she would respond. The pupil will describe what he/ she would do and say in that situation.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- The specialist will discuss the pupil's responses regarding the discussed scenarios and point out the healthy boundaries and the process of boundary setting.
- A task for the following week may be given: the expert will set the goal for the pupil to set clear boundaries in at least one instance during the daily interactions. The pupil will have to share his/ her experience in boundary setting the next session.
- Another option is to set the goal for the pupil to respect the other people's boundaries in at least one situation and share the experience in the next session.

THINGS TO SAY

"I'm not comfortable with this."

"I can't do that for you."

"Please, don't do that."

"This doesn't work for me."

"I've decided not to."

"This is not acceptable."

"I will do it if you want me to."

"Maybe."

"We'll see."

"I won't have to time to rest, but let's go."

"I'm so sorry, but I can't."

"Oh, no! I feel so guilty that I'm not coming."

BOUNDARY SITUATIONS CARDS

You've invited a friend at your house to play, but now it's getting late. You would like to get ready for bed, but your friend seems unaware of how late it is.

You missed several days of school due to a problem at home. When you get back, some classmate asks what happened. You feel this information is personal and do not want to share.

You notice that your friend has been eating the snacks you bring to school. You never discussed plans to share food and don't want him/ her eating what you have brought with you.

Your classmate is upset about losing at a game he/ she played during break time. He/ she starts yelling and slamming his/ her fist against his/ her desk. This is making you very uncomfortable.

Your classmate is constantly asking you to do favours for him/ her. For example, he/ she asks you to take his/ her coat in the classroom or to go get him/ her some water. You don't want to act like their servant.

INDIVIDUAL SESSION 17

Title/ topic:

- Conflict management

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- be able to manage conflict.

Preparation:

- The specialist greets the child and asks him/ her how he/ she feels, while shifting the focus on others' feelings. Possible questions to use: *How was your day? How do you feel? How did others feel in your presence? How did you make others feel? How did others make you feel?* The expert adapts the questions to the child, taking into account all the information gathered so far about him/ her.

Resources:

- worksheet and cards (see the annexes at pages 96-97);
- blank sheets of paper;
- pencils, colouring pencils, rubber, sharpener, eraser, markers.

Main activity:

- The specialist discusses with the child about the healthy and unhealthy ways to deal with conflict. He/ she uses the cards "Ways to deal with conflict" and asks the pupil to classify them as healthy or unhealthy, further on discussing his/ her choices.
- The expert then initiates a discussion on big problems versus small problems and asks the child to connect the size of a problem with different ways of dealing with conflict.
- Conflict resolution strategies include ***negotiation***, ***mediation*** and ***arbitration***.
- Depending on the type of conflict pupils are dealing with, they may be able to deal with that conflict on their own (small problems) or they may need to involve an adult in the situation (mediation/ arbitration for big problems).
- The specialist provides the child with the worksheet "Big problems vs small problems". The pupil may write/ draw examples of problems. For the part regarding how to deal with them, the pupil may use the conflict resolution strategies previously discussed or explain how he/ she would behave. He/ she may write/ draw or use a colour code for each strategy.
- Conflict resolution ideas: ask for help, negotiate, compromise, avoid the problem.
- The expert should emphasize the importance of avoiding violence in addressing conflicts.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

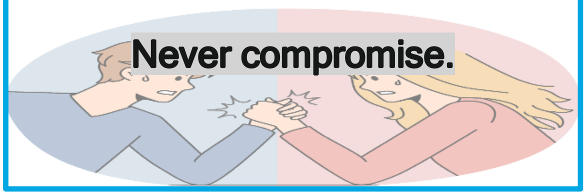
- The specialist discusses the pupil's responses regarding the potential way to solve his/ her small and big problems. He/ she makes suggestions and asks for reflections on the outcomes of each situation.
- The expert asks the pupil to proceed to thought filtering when he/ she comes across conflict. Here are some questions to guide the reflection: *Why am I thinking this? Is it hurtful to me? Is it hurtful to the other person? Does it work for me? Does it work for the other person? What works for both? Can/ should I compromise?*

WAYS TO DEAL WITH CONFLICT

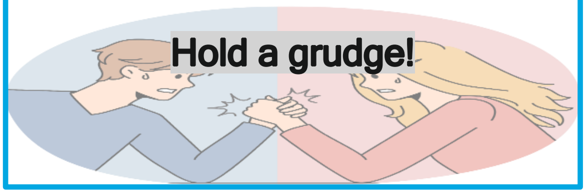
Shouldn’t care about the other person’s point of view.

Give up on something that is important to you.

Shout, push, hit or threaten the other person.



Never compromise.



Hold a grudge!

Be interested in the other’s point of view.

Use your calm and assertive voice to express your feelings.

Don’t take things too personally.

Learn to forgive.

Become able to compromise.

Work to find solutions that can accommodate both sides.

Ask an adult to intervene and help reach consensus.

BIG PROBLEMS VS SMALL PROBLEMS AND HOW TO DEAL WITH THEM

TYPE OF PROBLEM	EXAMPLES	HOW TO DEAL WITH THEM
BIG PROBLEMS		
SMALL PROBLEMS		

Final Session

SESSION 18

Title/ topic:

- Extract important lessons and wisdom to take on to the future

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- be able to reflect upon what they have learnt and assess the level they have changed;
- be able to extract important lessons for their behaviour in the future;
- feel empowered and responsible for their relationships.

Preparation:

- The specialist will create a cosy atmosphere and will announce that this would be the last session.
- In order to promote safety and empowerment, the specialist will re-affirm his/ her availability in the future if difficult situations were to arise.
- The point of this session is to help the pupil summarize what he/ she has learnt during the sessions and to feel empowered to put in practice those lessons.

Resources:

- writing paper and instruments to take notes;
- coloured pencils/ felt pens;
- motivational stickers.

Main activity:

- The specialist facilitates reflection on the development of the pupil, by helping him/ her recall how he/ she behaved or what he/ she said during the first sessions.
- The specialist then asks the pupil to express his/ her opinion about the present moment compared to the initial moment of their relationships. The pupil might be encouraged to take notes or to draw the important conclusions. Motivational stickers might be used for self-evaluation or for highlighting the child's strong points. Here are some questions which may be used:
    - *How do you feel now compared to then?*
    - *How have your life/ behaviour/ relationships changed? Have they improved? How can you explain that?*
    - *What conclusions have you drawn from our work? Where and how can you apply them?*
    - *How will you maintain your development? How will you prevent relapse into your old, not so healthy habits/ behaviours?*
    - *What are the areas that you think you still need to improve/ develop?*

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- The pupil may take away with him/ her notes/ drawings with reflections.
- The specialist will summarize the reflections and will offer a motivational message to the pupil, in order to encourage him/ her to apply the lessons learnt and take responsibility for his/ her own development.

Guidelines for specialists for group work

8.1. Principles of working with a group/ class

Just as in the case with individual work, in order to make progress and increase their abilities, the members of the training/ learning group need to feel safe and listened to. The main role of the teacher of small pupils is to manage the group in such a way as to increase trust, develop cooperation relations, promote respect for individuality and stimulate freedom of expression. All of those are attributes of a ***safe space for learning and development***, which is absolutely inherent in order for the pupils to set and achieve learning goals.

Creating a safe space for a group of small pupils starts from the teacher's attitudes towards the children, because the teacher is, as previously pointed out, a role model and a person that pupils are relying on for guidance and support:

- Children are genetically engineered to search for the protection and care of an adult - this is also common to other species - and, because the school presents them the challenge to rely on other people than their own families, on which they are attached to, the next best thing is the teacher, which they see every day and which they trust simply because their parents seem to trust him/ her. What is expected of the teacher is to take on gracefully the role of the bigger, stronger, wiser and kind person that the children may rely on, even when the situations are not strictly related to school (e.g. if a child is sick or gets hurt or if he/ she is anxious about something).
- Pupils learn better and faster when they feel relaxed, joyful, stress-free and when they feel free to express their ideas and creativity. The teacher should promote a non-judgemental atmosphere, in which pupils feel comfortable to make mistakes and learn from them and in which personal rhythms are respected.
- Small children need structure in order to feel safe: they need to have a schedule, they need to know what is expected of them, they need to know the rules they should abide by. Communicating these aspects right from the start and having them posted in a visible place will ensure a smooth group dynamic.
- Active participating in collective decisions and having the opportunity to express their opinions and preferences helps the children adapt faster and feel responsible for implementing those decisions and actions.
- Usually a class of pupils is quite a heterogeneous group, thus the teachers should design accessible and inclusive learning experiences, regardless of ability level, economic situation, gender or race variance, religious affiliations or culture. In this respect, employing a variety of teaching methods and techniques and adapting the learning objectives and materials to the particularities of the pupils is most recommended.
- Small pupils can easily be discouraged by failure and critique, thus teachers should consider adapting the tasks in order to make them achievable and offer feedback with care and focusing on the improvement potential instead of on the mistake itself. Of course, honesty and trust are desired in this relationship like in any other.
- Generally speaking, the level of social awareness in the case of small pupils is modest, as they still tend to have a partially self-centred image of the world, thus they are prone to hurt each other without realizing or to say mean things without completely grasping their impact. Teachers should be prepared to mediate such behaviours, in order to prevent children from getting hurt (physically or emotionally), but also in order to educate their awareness and behaviours. They should also stress the idea that the safe space for learning and developing is mutually created by all members of the

group and should lead pupils towards mutual cooperation and kind behaviours.

- In those cases in which the specialist or the teacher works with a class which includes children with behavioural problems, the recommended approach is to avoid any differentiation between the pupils and work with the class as a whole, in order to help them feel safe and included. Moreover, these children need enhanced validation in order to get to know and integrate their own resources.

Every child is unique and has his/ her own constellation of personal resources and needs, while the educational goal is singular: helping pupils reach their potential. In this respect, teachers and specialists are the ones that need to adapt to the children's particularities and not the other way around.

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8.2. Groups sessions

Introductory session

GROUP SESSION 1

Title/ topic:

- Establish a safe group for growth and development

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- learn new things about the other members of the group;
- be able to participate in the elaboration and to accept the rules of the group;
- feel integrated as part of a group;
- feel motivated to take responsibility for the co-construction of the safe group for learning and development.

Preparation:

- The classroom hosting the group lessons should be friendly and allow frequent reorganization of the space in order to facilitate interaction between members.
- The specialist will invite the group members to sit in a circle, so they may see each other.
- The specialist will present himself/ herself and will explain the purpose of the group sessions they are starting together, stressing also how the pupils will benefit from those group lessons.
- The point of this session is to get to know each other and establish a trustworthy relationship.

Resources:

- coloured pencils/ felt pens;
- sheets of paper for drawing;
- flipchart and markers.

Main activity:

- The specialist will instruct the group members to think about a real or imaginary place that helps them feel safe and draw it on the paper. The pupils are encouraged to draw as much detail as possible. All the pupils will then share their drawings with the others and explain how the place they have drawn makes them feel safe.
- After all the drawings have been shared, the specialist will summarize the common aspects which describe a safe space and will point out that all people need to feel safe in order to be able to learn and grow, that safety refers to both physical and psychological aspects and that every member of the group plays his/ her part in creating a safe space for himself/ herself and for the other.
- The specialist will then establish together with the ground some rules that will regulate the sessions of the learning group and will write them on a flip-chart sheet. The group may also be invited to establish consequences if the rules are broken.
- Also, the specialist should observe the dynamics of the group and point out the need of safety (sitting together with people they know already etc.) and the co-creation of the learning environment (people helping each other, leading etc.).

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- The following questions might be used to guide the group discussion: *Why do we need to feel safe in order to be able to learn and grow? How does the class resemble a family? What do we need to to/ not do in order to feel safe in our group?*
- The session ends with a summarization of the group rules and a motivational message to inspire the pupils to take care of each other and facilitate a friendly atmosphere.

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SELF-AWARENESS

GROUP SESSION 2

Title/ topic:

- "The world of emotions" - pleasant and unpleasant emotions.

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- discover the world of emotions;
- identify pleasant and unpleasant emotions.

Preparation:

- The expert sits down with the pupils in a circle and greets them.
- The expert introduces the topic and goals of the meeting to the children.

Resources:

- 2 flipchart paper sheets and markers;
- sticky notes in the following colours: red, yellow, blue, green, pink, orange, white.
- worksheets "Our journey through the world of emotions" and "Mask" (see the annexes at pages 105-106);
- a pair of scissors for every participant, string, crayons, paints, markers, pastels, tissue paper, cut-outs and other art and craft supplies.

Main activity:

- The specialist shows the children colourful sticky notes. Each note represents an emotion: red = anger, yellow = joy, blue = sadness, pink = fear, green = disgust, orange = surprise. The expert makes sure that all children understand these emotions. In case of doubt, he/ she explains what the different emotions are. The children's task is to stick the notes in the colours that correspond to their current emotions to the common flipchart sheet of the entire group (e.g. if a child feels angry and disgusted, he/ she sticks a red sticky note and a green one). The child can also use a white sticky note to write down the name or draw a face expressing a different emotion from the 6 basic ones, that he/ she is feeling at the moment.
- After all the children stick their notes, the expert discusses the flipchart to show the young participants what emotions they start their class with, what emotions predominate and what emotions are scarce. The flipchart sheet hangs in a visible place until the end of class.
- The specialist will then read the story "Our journey through the world of emotions", inviting the children to engage themselves in a symbolic role play (pretending). Afterwards, the children are invited to share their impressions on the journey. The following questions may be asked: *How did you feel on each planet? Visiting what planet made you feel comfortable? Which planet made you feel uneasy and why?*
- Next, the expert distributes to the children the worksheet "Mask", inviting them to cut out the masks and attach a string to them. Each child decides which planet gave him/ her the most pleasant experience and paints the mask in such a way that it matches the emotions associated with the chosen planet. Next, the children choose the planet where they felt the least comfortable and paint the other side of the mask so that it

matches the emotions associated with the second planet they chose. At the end, all the children present both sides of their masks, explaining which planets they have chosen and why.

- The expert summarizes the presentation of the masks made by the children, by drawing attention to the emotions repeatedly referred to as pleasant and unpleasant. He/ she points out that there are many emotions in life and people especially like to experience the pleasant ones, but they are all equally important and the children will see how in the following sessions.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- The expert reminds the children of the meaning of the sticky note colours: red = anger, yellow = joy, blue = sadness, pink = fear, green = disgust, orange = surprise and white - to write/ draw another emotion. He/ she asks the children to stick the notes on a clean flipchart sheet to show their emotions at the end of the class. As at the beginning, the specialist discusses the flipchart to show the pupils what emotions they end the class with: *What emotions predominate? What emotions are scarce?*
- The expert sticks the flipchart sheet created at the beginning of the class next to the one that has just been created and asks the children if they can see the difference between the emotions they felt at the beginning and at the end of the class. The specialist initiates a brainstorming: *Have the emotions within the group changed? What could have led to a change in emotions? Or why has nothing changed?*

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OUR JOURNEY THROUGH THE WORLD OF EMOTIONS[1]

We are going on a journey through the galaxy. During the space travel we are going to visit many mysterious planets. Of course, we are going to travel in a huge space ship that can accommodate us all. So let's sit down, make ourselves comfortable, buckle up and get ready cause we are about to lift off. 3... 2... 1... START! The speed of the rocket pushes us all back into the seats. Now I will explain to you that we will be visiting different planets where the inhabitants feel different emotions. When we reach a given planet, we must remember to behave like all its inhabitants.

Attention, my little astronauts, we are reaching the Planet of Joy, where the beautiful sun always shines and you can see a colourful rainbow in the sky at all times. The inhabitants of this planet are happy and smiling. They are pleased from morning to evening. They stretch contentedly, greet each other with a smile, jump up in joy, and laugh holding their stomach. It is time to say goodbye to the Planet of Joy. We are moving on.

Suddenly it gets dark and cloudy; the sun is nowhere to be seen. We have arrived at the Planet of Sorrow. Its inhabitants are always sad and depressed. Nothing makes them happy, nothing gives them joy. They walk slowly, dragging their feet, staring at the floor, not looking others in the eyes, not saying anything to anyone, and sometimes crying softly. We are about to say goodbye to the Planet of Sorrow.

We board our rocket and, in no time, we land on the Planet of Love. Here, everyone says nice things to one another, draws hearts in the air, sends kisses to each other, picks flowers from the ground and visit friends to have a chat. If they want to, they hug each other or walk hand in hand. Everyone is pleased and comfortable.

We're moving on to the next planet. This time we have arrived at the Planet of Anger. The people who live here are always angry. They bare their teeth at others and offend one another. They are nervous, walk fast, stamp their feet, growl at each other and even swinging at others. Let's get off this planet quickly. We hurriedly get into the rocket and move on...

...straight to the Planet of Gratitude. Here, every resident expresses gratitude to other residents. The gratitude can be expresses in words, by a handshake, embrace or asking them to dance. Some people give flowers or gifts to others. Everyone is smiling. The rocket is waiting, we're moving on.

We are reaching another planet where you can see nothing! Look around, can you see anyone? And yet, if we look closely, we can see the inhabitants who are hiding Can you see them? They are hidden behind various objects: chairs, benches, beds. That means we're on the Planet of Fear. Here, everyone is hiding from everyone else, staring at each other with wide eyes, chattering teeth, and even shaking with fear. They only talk in whispers and walk so quietly that no one can hear them. Let's get out of here before they get scared!

Now we have a long journey ahead of us to another unknown planet, so let's sit down, take three big breaths and calm down. The spaceship flies on and drops us off on the Planet of Peace. Everyone here is smiling. They move calmly and carefully, gently stroke each other's backs, walk hand in hand or sit side by side. It is quiet, every inhabitant feels good on this planet.

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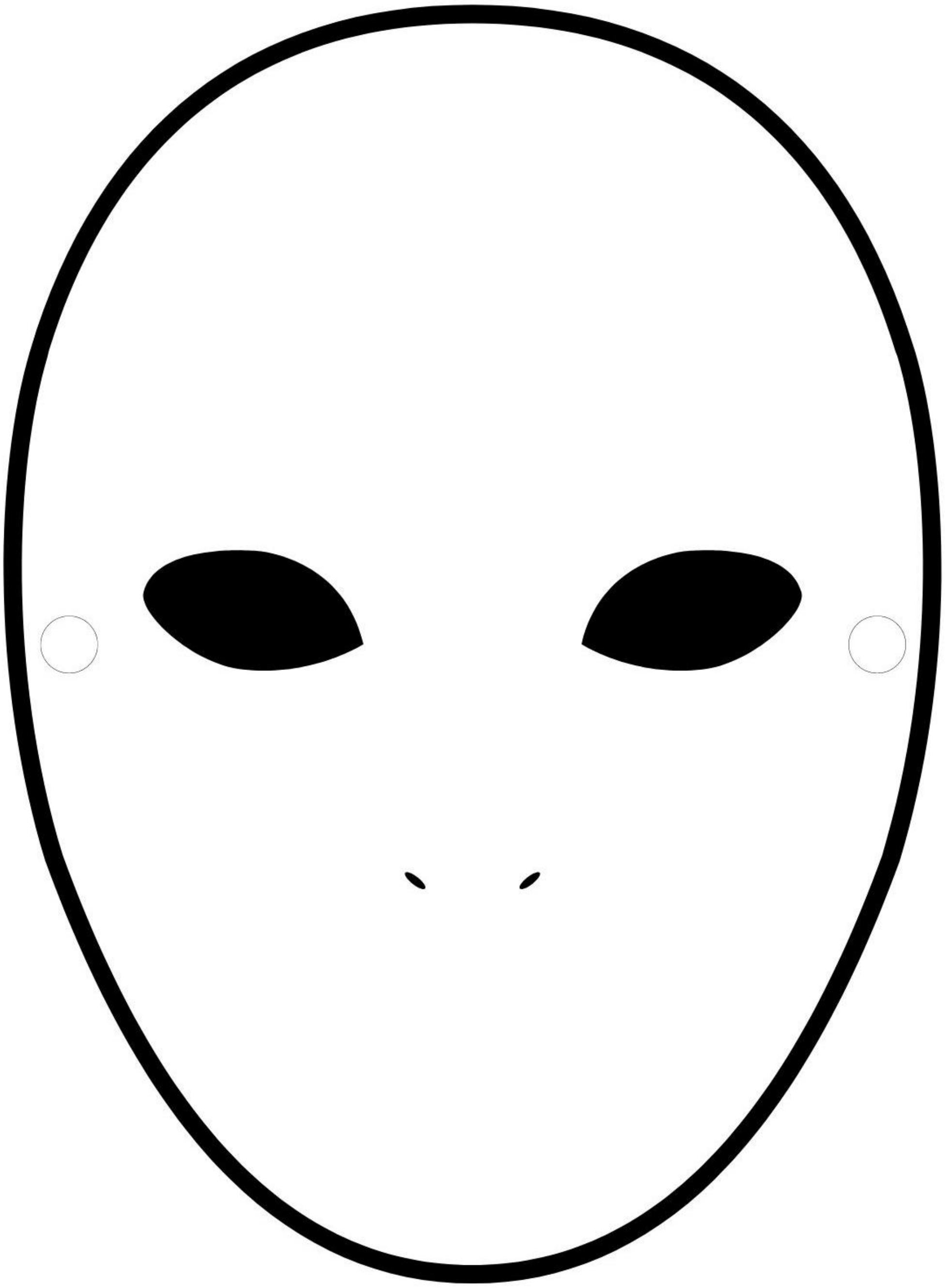
[1] Prepared on the basis of the "Land of emotions" game - Agnieszka Lasota, Dominika Jońca SM "Emotions, Communication, Acceptance - Preventive and Therapeutic Programme for Preschool and School Children"

MASK



GROUP SESSION 3

Title/ topic:

- “How do emotions arise and what do they signify?”

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- developing the ability to recognise, name and express emotions;
- have raised awareness on the fact that all emotions are important, necessary and provide us with important information.

Preparation:

- The specialist sits down with the pupils in a circle and greets them.
- The expert introduces the topic and goals of the meeting to the children.

Resources:

- 3 flipchart paper sheets;
- A4 paper sheets;
- sticky notes in the following colours: red, yellow, blue, green, pink, orange, white.
- crayons, paints, markers, pastels, tissue paper, cut-outs and other art and craft supplies.

Main activity:

- The specialist shows the children colourful sticky notes. Each note represents an emotion: red = anger, yellow = joy, blue = sadness, pink = fear, green = disgust, orange = surprise. The expert makes sure that all children understand these emotions. In case of doubt, he/ she explains what the different emotions are. The children’s task is to stick the notes in colours that corresponds to their current emotions to the common flipchart sheet of the entire group (e.g. if a child feels angry and disgusted, he/ she sticks a red sticky note and a green one). The child can also use a white sticky note to write down the name or draw a face expressing a different emotion from the 6 basic ones, that he/ she is feeling at the moment.
- After all the children stick their notes, the expert discusses the flipchart to show the young participants what emotions they start their class with, what emotions predominate and what emotions are scarce. The flipchart sheet hangs in a visible place until the end of class.
- The specialist will then initiate a conversation with the class about the rainbow. The expert asks the children if they know when a rainbow appears? If necessary, he/ she explains that a rainbow appears when it is still raining after a storm, but the sun is already starting to shine. Children list the colours of the rainbow in the correct order by themselves or with the expert's assistance.
- The expert asks the children to create a rainbow of emotions/ moods. A flipchart paper sheet will serve as the background for the rainbow. Each colour symbolises a specific emotion/ mood. It is important that children use a different technique for each colour - paints, crayons, pastels, plasticine, tissue paper or other supplies provided by the specialist. When the rainbow is ready, the children draw or write (by themselves or with the specialist’s assistance) the name of the corresponding emotion inside each colour associated with this particular emotion (e.g.: The colours of the rainbow appear in the following order: red - anger; orange - surprise; yellow - joy; green - calm; blue - sadness; navy blue - fear; purple - shame.
- When the rainbow is ready, the children together fill the rest of the background with a cloudy sky on one side and a clear sky on the other. The completed rainbow that the children have prepared together will be hanged on the wall so that every child can see it.

- The specialist talks to children about the importance of all the emotions we experience in our lives. He/ she explains to children that just like the rainbow needs all these colours we also need all the emotions in our life.
- The specialist explains to the children that every emotion is evoked by a situation. Next, all the children take part in a brainstorming session to fill one side of the rainbow (the cloudy one) by sticking notes with drawn/ written situations that could evoke each of the emotions. There should be at least one situation for each emotion.
- At the other end of the rainbow (the clear sky), the children stick notes in the same way, but this time they draw/ write their ideas about the information conveyed by a given emotion. At least one idea should be listed for each emotion (e.g., anger informs us that our boundaries have been violated; sadness informs us that we have lost something important to us; anxiety/ fear protects us from danger; shame informs us that we have exceeded some norms; joy informs us about feeling fulfilled and happy).
- At the end, the specialist sums up the resulting rainbow, emphasizing that all emotions are good and that there are no “bad” or “negative” emotions. He/ she indicates which emotions are pleasant and which are unpleasant for us, emphasizing the importance and significance of all emotions in our lives, referring to the exercise the children have just completed.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- The expert reminds the children of the meaning of the sticky note colours: red = anger, yellow = joy, blue = sadness, pink = fear, green = disgust, orange = surprise and white - to write/ draw another emotion. He/ she asks the children to stick the notes on a clean flipchart sheet to show their emotions at the end of the class. As at the beginning, the specialist discusses the flipchart to show the pupils what emotions they end the class with: *What emotions predominate? What emotions are scarce?*
- The expert sticks the flipchart sheet created at the beginning of the class next to the one that has just been created and asks the children if they can see the difference between the emotions they felt at the beginning and at the end of the class. The specialist initiates a brainstorming: *Have the emotions within the group changed? What could have led to a change in emotions? Or why has nothing changed?*

GROUP SESSION 4

Title/ topic:

- “How can I identify my emotions? How can I recognise what I feel?”

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- recognize their own basic emotions;
- be able to label their own emotions.

Preparation:

- The specialist sits down with the pupils in a circle and greets them.
- The expert introduces the topic and goals of the meeting to the children.

Resources:

- 6 flipchart paper sheets;
- sticky notes in the following colours: red, yellow, blue, green, pink, orange, white;
- worksheet “What are emotions?” (see the annex at page 110);
- crayons, paints, markers, pastels.

Main activity:

- The specialist shows the children colourful sticky notes. Each note represents an emotion: red = anger, yellow = joy, blue = sadness, pink = fear, green = disgust, orange = surprise. The expert makes sure that all children understand these emotions. In case of doubt, he/ she explains what the different emotions are. The children’s task is to stick the notes in colours that corresponds to their current emotions to the common flipchart sheet of the entire group (e.g. if a child feels angry and disgusted, he/ she sticks a red sticky note and a green one). The child can also use a white sticky note to write down the name or draw a face expressing a different emotion from the 6 basic ones, that he/ she is feeling at the moment.
- After all the children stick their notes, the expert discusses the flipchart to show the pupils what emotions they start the class with, what emotions predominate, what emotions are scarce. The flipchart hangs in a visible place until the end of class.
- The specialist reminds the children the emotions we may experience, making reference to the previous classes and gives instructions for playing the game "What emotion is this?”. The pupils sit in circle. The expert reads descriptions of emotions from the worksheet "What emotion is this?”. The children's task is to identify the emotion corresponding to each description. After completing the game, the expert asks the pupils: *Which emotion was the easiest to guess? Which was the hardest?*
- Next, on 4 large sheets of paper (flipchart paper), the expert and the children outline four children silhouettes. Each silhouette is outlined using a different colour: red, blue, yellow and black. The specialist explains that the colour of each silhouette corresponds to a particular emotion: red = anger, blue = sadness, yellow = joy, black = fear (other emotions may be chosen if they are worth discussing concerning the specificity of the group). The expert divides the children into 4 groups, each of them gets one silhouette corresponding to a given emotion. Children in groups are asked to come up with answers to the following questions: (1) *How do we know when we feel a given emotion?* (2) *Where does this emotion reside in our body?* Children can write down (by themselves or with the educator’s assistance), draw or colour the parts of the body where they feel a given emotion. They should try to find as many examples as possible.
- Each group presents their work to the rest of the children, explaining the marked/ written items. After each group has given their presentation, the specialist asks all the children if they know any other examples which did not appear on the posters. Children talk about all four emotions, not just the one they described in their group.
- The specialist sums up the discussions, emphasizing that there are many ways to know whether we feel anger, fear, sadness or joy in a given moment. He/ she points out that each of us may feel our emotions in a different way, but there are also many similarities.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- The specialist reminds the children of the meaning of the sticky note colours: red = anger, yellow = joy, blue = sadness, pink = fear, green = disgust, orange = surprise and white - to write/ draw another emotion. He/ she asks the children to stick the notes on a clean flipchart sheet to show their emotions at the end of the class. As at the beginning, the expert discusses the flipchart to show the pupils what emotions they end the class with: *What emotions predominate? What emotions are scarce?*
- The expert sticks the flipchart sheet created at the beginning of the class next to the one that has just been created and asks the children if they can see the difference between the emotions they felt at the beginning and at the end of the class. The specialist initiates a brainstorming: *Have the emotions within the group changed? What could have led to a change in emotions? Or why has nothing changed?*

WHAT EMOTION IS THIS?

1. **What opens your mouth wide in awe and makes eyes round like a hat made of straw?**

   (answer: surprise/delight)

2. **What frowns your forehead and narrows the eyes, stumps your foot and swings the fists around?**

   (answer: anger)

3. **What makes things look twice as bad as they should, shakes your body or makes you unable to move?**

   (answer: fear)

4. **What turns the corners of your lips down and gets tears flowing from your eyes?**

   (answer: sadness)

5. **What makes your arms wave and your body jump high, your eyes like the sparks ignite and your teeth like diamonds shine?**

   (answer: joy)

GROUP SESSION 5

Title/ topic:

- “How can I express my emotions? How can I communicate my emotions?”

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- be able to express their own emotions in front of a group;
- be able to express their emotions both verbally and non-verbally through movement, gestures, facial expression.

Preparation:

- The specialist sits down with the pupils in a circle and greets them.
- The expert introduces the topic and goals of the group session to the pupils.

Resources:

- 2 flipchart paper sheets and markers;
- sticky notes in the following colours: red, yellow, blue, green, pink, orange, white.

Main activity:

- The specialist shows the children colourful sticky notes. Each note represents an emotion: red = anger, yellow = joy, blue = sadness, pink = fear, green = disgust, orange = surprise. The expert makes sure that all children understand these emotions. In case of doubt, he/ she explains what the different emotions are. The children’s task is to stick the notes in colours that corresponds to their current emotions to the common flipchart sheet of the entire group (e.g. if a child feels angry and disgusted, he/ she sticks a red sticky note and a green one). The child can also use a white sticky note to write down the name or draw a face expressing a different emotion from the 6 basic ones, that he/ she is feeling at the moment.
- After all the children stick their notes, the expert discusses the flipchart to show the pupils what emotions they start the class with, what emotions predominate, what emotions are scarce. The flipchart sheet hangs in a visible place until the end of class.
- The pupils sit in a circle. The specialist explains that the task of each pupil will be to express a given emotion without using words. Children are supposed to show the indicated emotion using body movements, gestures or facial expressions. The pupils take turns to express the emotions indicated by the expert in their own way. The game continues until every pupil has presented the following emotions: *joy, sadness, horror, satisfaction, fear, astonishment, disgust, surprise, delight, pride, anger, love, rage, shame, happiness, longing, regret, embarrassment.* At the end, the game is summarised. The specialist asks the children questions about how they felt expressing each emotion and if they found some emotions easier and some harder to express.
- Next, the same exercise is repeated, but this time the children have to communicate a given emotion using words only. The game continues until every child has presented all the emotions that the educator indicates, one by one: *joy, sadness, horror, satisfaction, fear, astonishment, disgust, surprise, delight, pride, anger, love, rage, shame, happiness, longing, regret, embarrassment.* The pupils cannot use the name of a given emotion indicated to them by the educator (e.g. "joy" - the correct way of describing the emotion is "I smile a lot when I feel it”, the wrong way is "I feel joy"). At the end, the game is summarised. The specialist asks the children questions about how they felt expressing each emotion verbally and if they found some emotions easier and some harder to describe.

- The expert sums up both games by asking the children questions: *Which way is easier for you to communicate your emotions - verbal or non-verbal? Which emotions do you prefer to communicate verbally and which ones non-verbally, and why?*
- The specialist invites pupils to play: the pupils should imagine they only know how to say one sentence "ALILE HAS GOT A CAT". Every pupil is asked to choose an emotion without revealing it to the others. Next, the children are asked to express the sentence "Alice has got a cat" with the appropriate voice modulation corresponding to the emotion they have chosen, so that the others can guess what the emotion was.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- The specialist reminds the children of the meaning of the sticky note colours: red = anger, yellow = joy, blue = sadness, pink = fear, green = disgust, orange = surprise and white - to write/ draw another emotion. He/ she asks the children to stick the notes on a clean flipchart sheet to show their emotions at the end of the class. As at the beginning, the expert discusses the flipchart to show the pupils what emotions they end the class with: *What emotions predominate? What emotions are scarce?*
- The expert sticks the flipchart sheet created at the beginning of the class next to the one that has just been created and asks the children if they can see the difference between the emotions they felt at the beginning and at the end of the class. The specialist initiates a brainstorming: *Have the emotions within the group changed? What could have led to a change in emotions? Or why has nothing changed?*

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SELF-MANAGEMENT

GROUP SESSION 6

Title/ topic:

- "Can I control myself?" - impulse control

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- be able to explore self-control and impulse control through educational play;
- learn to listen carefully and think before acting.

Preparation:

- The class can continue the flipchart emotions activity (see self awareness group session plans) here as well, in the beginning and the end of the lesson. It would be advisable that, if a child consistently reports unpleasant emotions, the specialist should follow up after the end of the lesson and check up on him/ her.

Resources:

- flipchart sheets;
- sticky notes in the following colours: red, yellow, blue, green, pink, orange, white;
- markers/ highlighters/ pens/ pencils;
- music;
- a room with enough space to allow movement (e.g. sport hall, classroom free of desks or with furniture pulled to the sides etc.).

Main activity:

- The specialist informs the class that today's topic will be about self-control. He/ she asks the pupils if they know what this means (the trick part is that, if children call out without raising their hands to speak, the specialist can use that as an example of lack of self-control!). The expert then proceeds to give some examples of self- and impulse control.
- Further on, the specialist will ask the pupils if they can think of a time they were tempted to do something they knew they shouldn't. He/ she may offer examples for clarity (e.g., eating dessert before dinner). Then, the expert discusses with the pupils what did they do - give in to temptation or control themselves? What were/ would be the consequences in each case, what happened or could have happened?
- Note: A nice and immediate way to help the pupils exercise impulse control is to remind them to raise their hand and wait for their turn before speaking in class discussions.
- For the kinaesthetic part of the lesson, ask the children to dance on the music and to pay close attention to the music as they dance. When the music stops, they will have to freeze immediately, even if they are mid-motion. Whoever fails to do so, "melts" and will exit the game. After playing some rounds, the specialist will remind the pupils that it might be difficult to "freeze" while not being focused, so they should stop and think before acting on an impulse, just as they did while dancing.
- Using the flipchart, the specialist invites the pupils to collectively create a FREEZE POSTER, where they write ideas and ways that allow them to slow down and control

their impulses. The poster may be hanged in a prominent place in the classroom as a reminder for children to practice self-control, and, this way, it may be also updated throughout the year.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- The specialist iterates what was learnt during this class and challenges pupils to practice self-control in at least one situation for the following week (e.g., to raise their hands before speaking, to not interrupt someone else, to refrain from eating sweets before or after a certain hour etc.). The pupils may be invited to write down the instances they succeeded in a notebook or a journal.
- The expert may also ask the pupils what stuck out to them or what did they find interesting throughout today's session.
- The emotions flipchart activity can be iterated at the end of the lesson as well, if there is time. This will help children keep in touch with their emotions and express themselves throughout the school year.

GROUP SESSION 7

Title/ topic:

- Coping with disappointment

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- learn how to effectively deal with disappointment.

Preparation:

- The class can continue the flipchart emotions activity (see self awareness group session plans) here as well, in the beginning and the end of the lesson.
- Alternatively, the specialist can follow up on the impulse control challenge given in the previous session and ask if anyone wants to share their success in achieving self-control.

Resources:

- sticky notes in the following colours: red, yellow, blue, green, pink, orange, white and some extra in whatever colours you want;
- flipchart sheets and A4 papers;
- markers/ highlighters/ pens/ coloured pencils/ crayons.

Main activity:

- The specialist introduces the topic of the session to the children, which will revolve around disappointment and how to deal with it. The expert then proceeds to ask children to think of a time when they felt disappointed. Some prompts that can be used: when they lost in a game, when they don't have nice food at home, when they open a cookie box and find sewing materials inside etc. The specialist should guide the children to reflect on: *How does it feel when those things happen?* The expert is encouraged to share a personal experience of disappointment as well.
- During the session, the specialist will also remind the children to practice self-control in group discussions by raising their hands and waiting permission to speak, not interrupting others etc.
- Further on, the pupils will receive A4 sheets and colouring pencils or crayons and they are asked to draw a fallen sand castle, like the ones that fall down on the beach when the water crashes them. They should be instructed to use light colours, so that

it will be possible to write inside or around the castle. After the drawing is complete, they will to write down, inside or around the fallen castle, some things that made them feel disappointed recently or a long time ago but still remember it. Pupils will not be forced to share out loud their reflections, but they can be encouraged to do so if they feel like it, as others might follow the example.

- Next, the specialist brings up the flipchart. It should be divided in the middle in two columns: one column will have the title ”Helpful” and the other will be entitled “Not helpful”. The expert can either ask the pupils to brainstorm ideas of helpful and not helpful ways of dealing with disappointment and note them down in the respective column or use the following prompts and ask the pupils to place them in the correct column: *“Yell at someone”, “Count to 10”, “Push the other person”, “Stomp your feet”, “Calm your body”, “Walk around a bit”, “Pout”, “Tell yourself you can handle it”, “Throw something”, “Take deep breaths”, “Try again”, “Use kind words”, “Break something”, “Go be by yourself for a few minutes”*. The specialist may add his/ her own ideas or the pupils’ ideas to the poster.
- The specialist then hands out sticky notes to the children. He/ she explains that we all sometimes deal with disappointment in unhelpful ways and asks the pupils to write down on their sticky notes one or two such unhelpful behaviours that they would like to change. Next, the pupils are asked to write down with which helpful behaviours they would like to replace the unhelpful ones. The expert should suggest that the children keep the sticky notes and put them somewhere where they can see them often to remind them to choose a helpful reaction in order to cope with disappointment (e.g. a notebook or in their room).
- Towards the end of the lesson, the specialist iterates what was discussed about disappointment and ways of coping with it and proceeds to hang the “Helpful - Not Helpful” poster in a place where all pupils can see it and possibly add to it through the course of the school-year.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- As a task/ challenge for the next week, the specialist asks the children to try and use at least one helpful behaviour the next time(s) they are faced with disappointment. The children can again be encouraged to write down their achievement on a notebook or journal, so as to make their progress clear to them.
- The emotions flipchart activity can be iterated at the end of the session as well, if there is time. This will help children keep in touch with their emotions and express themselves throughout the school year.

GROUP SESSION 8

Title/ topic:

- Coping with worry, stress and fear

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- be able to identify the things that elicit stress, worry or fear;
- be able to classify stress or fear factors;
- be able to find ways to cope with these emotions.

Preparation:

- The class can continue the flipchart emotions activity (see self-awareness group session plans) here as well, in the beginning and the end of the lesson.

- Alternatively, the specialist can follow up on the disappointment coping challenge given in the previous session and ask if anyone wants to share their success in dealing with disappointment in a helpful way.

Resources:

- sticky notes in the following colours: red, yellow, blue, green, pink, orange, white;
- flipchart or whiteboard/ chalkboard;
- worksheet "On a scale from…" (see the annex at page 117);
- pencils, pens, markers etc.

Main activity:

- The specialist begins by announcing the theme of the session and by reassuring children that the emotions of stress, worry and fear and perfectly normal and that everyone experiences them, since there are a lot of things happening around us that scare or worry us. He/ she will point out that every emotion is important and that the role of fear is to helps us protect ourselves from a dangerous situation and it is helpful to understand it, as well as find ways to cope with it.
- The specialist may lead with the question: *Who here has ever been scared?* (presumably, some hands or all hands will be raised). He/ she then proceeds to pose the question: *Can somebody explain what fear is?*. After the children have answered and a definition of the emotion has emerged (some somatic symptoms can be named by the specialist as well), the expert may go on with providing a personal example of fear or worry.
- Further on, the specialist hands out the previously prepared worksheets to all the pupils and asks them to think of and write down a few of the things that make them feel worried, stressed or afraid. After that, they can place them on the scale according to how serious these things seem to be for each child. The teacher can provide an example to help pupils complete the exercise.
- While the children are filling the worksheet, the specialist draws the same scale on the whiteboard/ flipchart sheet. After the pupils have completed the identifying and assessing of their worries and fears, they may be invited to share some reflections with the class, if they are comfortable with it.
- Note: The sharing part of the exercise should not be mandatory and pupils should be forced to share their fears with the class. Still, if sharing is a possibility, it should be encouraged and pupils should be reminded to be respectful towards the others' fears and worries and that many people might have the same fears, thus nothing is irrational or abnormal.
- Then, the specialist prompts the children to think of ways they can cope with fear, stress or worry. The pupils may also be directed to the "Helpful - Not Helpful" coping strategies of the previous session and invited to reflect on which strategies they can apply and if there are some new ones that can be added to either of the columns. Some examples may include; taking deep breaths, talking to a friend or parent or someone else they trust, doing nothing, not talking about the fears, feeling ashamed about their fears/ worries, thinking about positives (or negative) consequences that can happen etc.
- If there is some time at the end, the class can practice some deep breathing exercises (e.g. inhale for 4 seconds, hold for 4, exhale for 4, hold for 4).

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

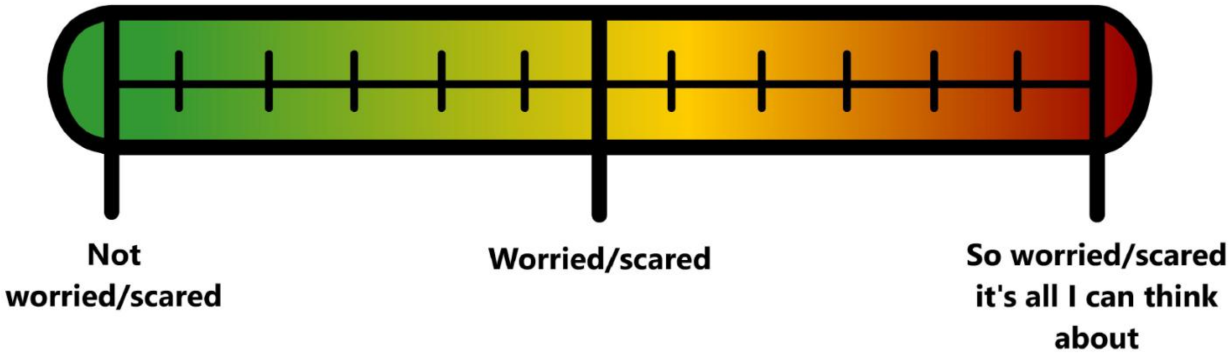
- The specialist summarizes what was discussed during the session. He/ she explains that it is normal for one person to be fearful about something that another isn't. He/ she also talks about the importance of talking about our fears to our parents, teachers, friends and trusted others, as they can make us feel better and help us devise a plan to overcome the fear or move it down the scale.

ON A SCALE FROM...

On the space down below, write a few things that make you feel worried, stressed or afraid:

1. ____
2. ____
3. ____
4. ____
5. ____
6. ____

Have a look at the scale below. Where would your worries or fears fall on this scale? You can mark the things listed above by using their numbers or key words.


Not worried/scared
Worried/scared
So worried/scared it's all I can think about

GROUP SESSION 9

Title/ topic:

- "You is kind, you is smart…" - strengths identification and positive self-talk

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- be able to identify their strengths;
- be able to engage in positive self-talk in response to adversities.

Preparation:

- The class can continue the flipchart emotions activity (see self-awareness group session plans) here as well, in the beginning and the end of the lesson.
- Alternatively, the specialist can invite pupils to share any progress/ successes in maintaining self-control in a tempting situation or in managing disappointment or calming down when feelings of fear/ worry arose, as an iteration of all that has been discussed in the previous sessions on self-management.

Resources:

- sticky notes in the following colours: red, yellow, blue, green, pink, orange, white;
- A4 sheets;
- flipchart or whiteboard/ chalkboard;
- worksheet "My strong flower" (see the annex at page 120);
- coloured pencils, pens, crayons, markers etc.

Main activity:

- The specialist introduces the topic and objectives of the current session, which will revolve around identifying one's own strengths, but also getting acquainted with positive self-talk when negative or difficult thoughts overwhelm us. He/ she explains that everyone has different strengths, that is, things they're good at, and those personal strengths can make things better for ourselves and the people around us, like the flowers that make a garden prettier. The expert instructs the pupils to think about their strengths and to write them down on the worksheet "My strong flower", highlighting that usually the strengths pertain more to character rather than physical traits.
- The specialist then proceeds to show his/ her own drawing of a flowerpot (the worksheet "My strong flower" may be used, but it also may be replaced with a drawing activity). On the pot, the expert has written a personal strength (e.g. "I have humour"), on the leaf he/ she has written a time when he/ she used this strength (e.g. "I told jokes to my friend") and on the flower itself there should be written what happened when that strength was used (e.g. "My friend was sad before and then started laughing"). Then, the specialist asks the children to draw a flowerpot of their own (with a pot, leaf and flower) or to use the worksheet and write down their own strength, when they used it and what happened. The pupils may colour their flowers as they like.
- If the pupils have trouble finding out their strength, the expert will give examples of what he/ she observed during the sessions or may invite the others to contribute. These prompts may be used: good listener, helpful, respectful, good friend, polite, patient, learns new things fast etc.
- After having completed this activity, the pupils can decide whether they want to take their flowers at home or have them on display in class, like a flower garden mounted on a wall.
- Next, the children get acquainted with positive self-talk. The specialist briefly explains what positive self-talk means (e.g. talking to oneself aloud or silently, like a little voice

which tries to battle the unpleasant and difficult thoughts when they arise). The expert can provide an example: when one is disappointed with the result on a test, that person may say to oneself that he/ she tried her best and that next time he/ she will study harder and do better.

- The specialist divides the flipchart/ the whiteboard in two columns:

Feelings	Positive thoughts
When I feel nervous…	“I believe in myself”
When I feel disappointed…	“I am a good person”
When someone is mean to me…	“I have courage and confidence”
When I’m left out…	“I’m going to get better”
When I feel worried…	“I can get through anything”
When I feel frustrated/ angry…	“I am proud of myself”
	“I am a good friend”

- He/ she asks the pupils to connect the feelings with each positive self-talk that could apply and together come up with more sentences of feelings and responses.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- The specialist summarizes what has been discussed and poses the following questions: *What have you learnt from today’s session?, What can you do differently in a future difficult situation?, How can you make yourself feel better?*
- The emotions flipchart activity can be iterated at the end of the lesson as well, if there is time.

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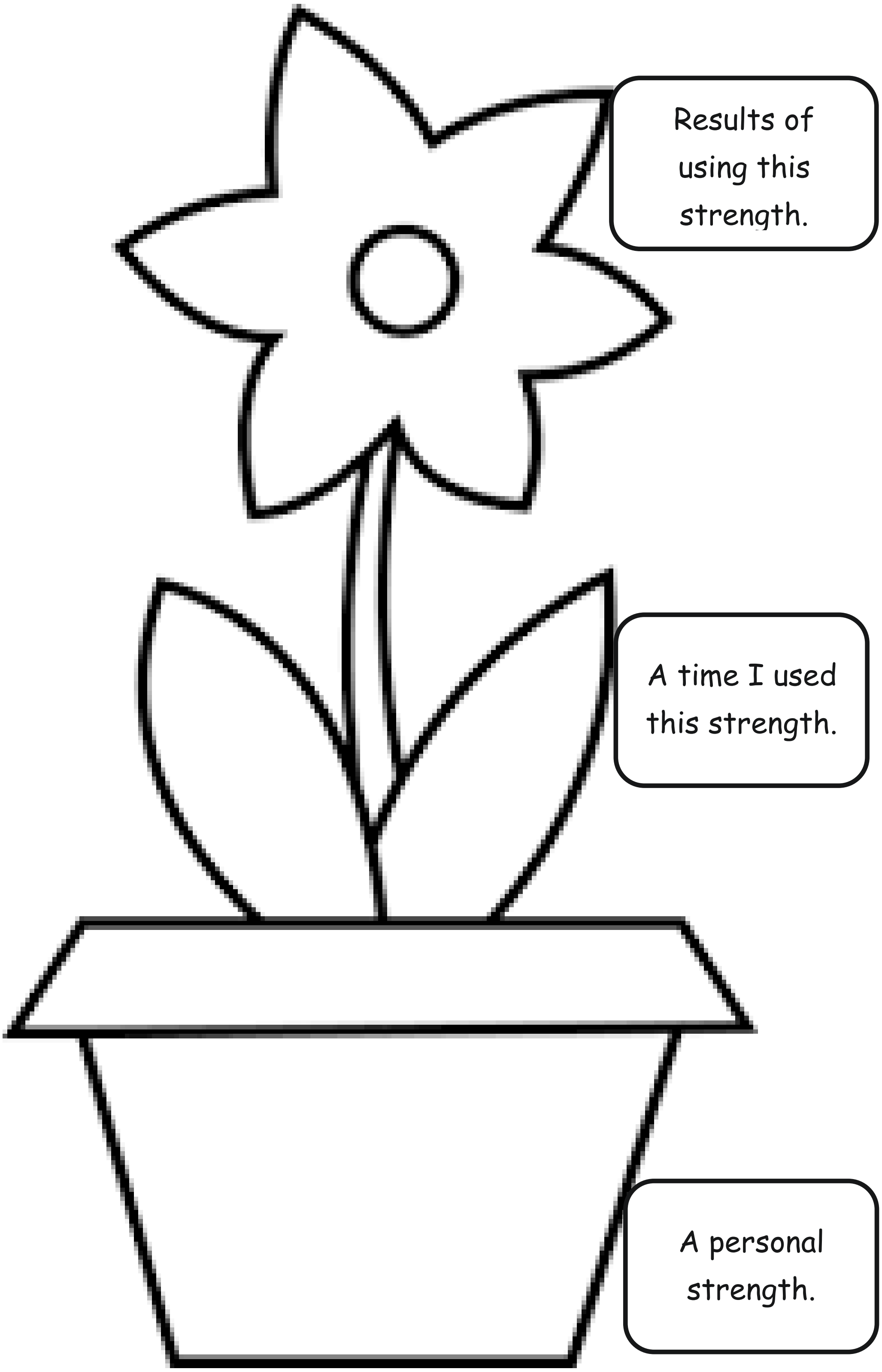
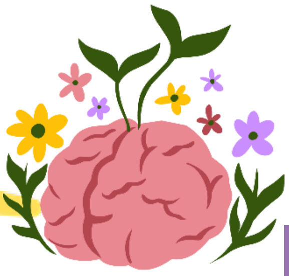
MY STRONG FLOWER


Results of using this strength.
A time I used this strength.
A personal strength.



GROUP SESSION 10

Title/ topic:

- "The daisy game" - education of tolerance

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- understand that it is not peers that annoy us, but their attitudes;
- improve their attitude of tolerance.

Preparation:

- The specialist needs to prepare two large drawings of two daisies on separate boards/ flipchart sheets, both of them having a number of petals equal to the number of children in the group. On the petals it will be written during the activity what each member of the class likes and dislikes.

Resources:

- 2 flipchart sheets/ whiteboards;
- pens, markers etc.

Main activity:

- The children sit in a circle, so that they may all see each other. Ground rules should be reminded: they need to speak one at a time, by raising their hand, and wait for the previous speaker to finish; they need to show respect and not to make fun about the things that others are sharing; they need to understand that the things to be discussed are not personal attacks on anyone, but a way of paying more attention to each other and their needs.
- The specialist invites the pupils to share what they like during school mornings with their classmates (e.g. chatting with friends, exchanging pencils etc.) and notes down the answers in the first daisy drawing.
- After the first daisy is completed, the specialist invites the children to share what they don't like when they are at school with the classmates (e.g. have their hair touched, have their things taken from them without permission etc.) and writes down the answers in the second daisy drawing.
- In the case of older children (9-10 years old), they may be invited to write their own answers on the daisy petals, so as to enhance the collective experience.
- The two drawings may be coloured and enriched with details, if the children enjoy dwelling on that.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- After both drawings are completed, the expert points out how different people are and how everyone needs to accept that, but also the fact that variety offers strength to a group/ community. Also, the expert help pupils reflect on the fact that there may be attitudes or behaviours that we don't like, that annoy us or even cause pain and initiates discussion on how to prevent that.

- The main conclusion of the activity is that pupils should pay attention to what others do not like and try to avoid those behaviours, while they should also pay attention to what others like and enjoy and try to do more of those behaviours.

GROUP SESSION 11

Title/ topic:

- Empathy development

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- understand that words and gestures have meaning;
- be able to find new ways of relating to peers.

Preparation:

- The specialist may prepare a list of inappropriate behaviours that have occurred or keep occurring during the pupils' interactions with each other (e.g. specific bullying situations, lack of respect for others' opinions or things etc.).
- Alternatively, the specialist might refer to a story that the pupils know and like, so that they may relate to (e.g. situations from the Harry Potter novels).

Resources:

- writing paper, pens.

Main activity:

- The specialist invites the pupils to discuss different situations of inappropriate behaviours that may occur or have occurred in their everyday life, without labelling the behaviours in any way. For example, the expert might say: *Let's imagine the following situation…*
- For each situation, the children are invited to identify how each character might feel and think.
- Further on, the specialist leads the discussion towards hypothetical changes of those situations: *What if the characters have said or done different things? What behaviour would have led to another type of feelings or thoughts?* Practically, the pupils are asked to reconstruct the situations/ the story line in order to obtain a different effect on the way that the characters are feeling and thinking.
- They may also be asked to write or draw a different ending to a story based on the discussions in the session.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- A potential task for the following week might be to pay attention to the others around them (in the family or in the classroom) and try to identify what they feel and think. The pupils may also verify if they were right or not by asking those persons to share their feelings and thoughts in the respective situations.

GROUP SESSION 12

Title/ topic:

- “The emotions on my face” - “reading” facial expressions and non-verbal language

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- recognize the emotions of others, by deciphering non-verbal language;
- be able to name the others’ emotions;
- develop empathy.

Preparation:

- According to the level of proficiency of the pupils regarding the social skills, the emotions that may be chosen to work on may vary: if the proficiency level is lower, the activity should focus on the more basic emotions, while if the proficiency level is higher, the activity may focus on more elaborate emotions (check the Plutchik wheel of emotions for further ideas).
- In the beginning of the session, pupils may be asked to share their experiences from trying to identify the emotions of others during the previous week.

Resources:

- several sets of picture cards representing different emotions/ written notes with words designating emotions.

Main activity:

- The specialist divides the group into smaller workgroups (3-5 persons), according to the total number of pupils. He/ she explains to the pupils that they will play a game in which each member of a team will have to randomly pick an emotion card/ an emotion name and represent, using only facial expression, the respective emotion. The other members of the workgroup have to guess which emotion their colleague is non-verbally expressing.
- This game can be played in numerous ways (e.g. emotions of different characters from books or movies may be represented, the group may be divided in pairs or work frontally as well etc.), offering flexibility for the specialist and options to adapt to the pupils’ needs and interests.
- The specialist will then explain how people may experience differently the same emotions, but there are some similarities that help us recognize the emotions of others. He/ she may point out some of these specific clues of some emotions. Also, the specialist may share the fact that no matter how hard we try to hide our emotions, they may be visible for someone that knows us really well.
- Equally essential is to point out to the pupils the importance of non-verbal language in our lives and to stress the fact that we need to pay attention to each other to better understand our social environment and also to understand the impact of our own actions upon others.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- A potential task for the following week might be to pay attention to the others around them (preferably people that are less know than family members or classmates) and try to identify what they feel, judging by their facial expressions. If opportunity arises, the pupils might verify if they were right or not by asking those persons to share their feelings and thoughts in the respective situations.

GROUP SESSION 13

Title/ topic:

- "The special forest" - group drawing/ cooperation

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- enhance their collaboration skills;
- develop their group identity attitudes.

Preparation:

- The final product will be a group drawing representing a forest.

Resources:

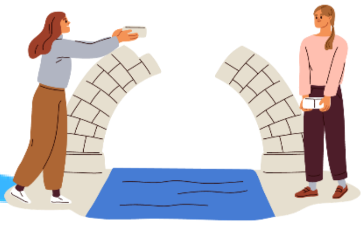
- long drawing paper/ flipchart sheet;
- felt-tip pens, colouring pencils, crayons, water colours, finger paints etc.

Main activity:

- The specialist will start the session with an imagination exercise. He/ she asks the pupils to imagine that they are trees. Each child will picture in his/ her mind the type of tree he/ she wants to be: they will reflect on the shape of their branches and their leaves, they will imagine if they have flowers or fruits; the children do not have to stick to the reality trees: they may picture a Christmas tree that makes figs for instance. After each pupil has a clear picture in mind of the tree that he/ she wants to be, the specialist asks the pupils to choose a spot on the drawing paper/ flipchart paper and draw the tree from their imagination exactly how they envisioned it (the specialist needs to help the pupils chose the right size of the drawing: if it is too big, there will be too small place left for the other pupils and if it is too small, the drawing will not be distinguishable among the others). The pupils will create together the drawing of a unique forest, each tree representing one member of the group.
- After the drawing is completed, the group is asked to give a name to their special forest. The specialist invites the pupils to reflect on the particularities of each tree and how these reflect the characteristics of each member of the group, but also on how each tree has its own needs to thrive in the forest.
- Also, the expert may strengthen the idea of togetherness, of collective effort and mutual support, inviting the pupils to continue to cooperate with one another in order to cultivate their special forest.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- The specialist will use the forest drawing to remind the children on different occasions about their common identity and mutual support, but also about the fact that each tree is different and must be treated with a special attention.
- Also, a possible task for the children is to think how they can enhance their special forest and improve teamwork in order for their forest to thrive. They may present their ideas in front of the class.



GROUP SESSION 14

Title/ topic:

- Mutual presentations - active listening

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- understand the meaning of a relationship and how to manage it;
- be familiar with and have practised active listening;
- understand personality and attitude.

Preparation:

- All the materials should be prepared in advance.
- The specialist will present the topic to the class.

Resources:

- flipchart/ whiteboard;
- writing paper;
- pens, pencils, colouring pencils, eraser, sharpener, markers.

Main activity:

- The specialist writes the word “relationship” on the whiteboard and asks the pupils to elicit relevant words to describe this concept, leading the discussion towards aspects that build a good relationship and aspects that destroy it.
- After the group discussion, the expert divides the group in pairs and each pupil asks their partner some questions about oneself in order to get to know each other, take notes and then each pupils present their partner to the class.
- The specialist then points out the importance and characteristics of active listening and may ask the group to vote for the most precise description. Also, in order to trigger understanding of social principles and active listening, as well as communication rules, the specialist analyses the key elements and attitudes appeared during the mutual presentation exercise (e.g. protection, help, enhancement etc.).

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- The specialist gives the pupils as a task for the following week to practice active listening with those around them.

GROUP SESSION 15

Title/ topic:

- Conflict management

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- be familiar with the fact that relationships have both positive and negative aspects;
- be able recognise problems/ conflicts which can rise in relationships;
- work collaboratively in order to manage conflict;
- communicate effectively verbally and non-verbally and take decisions in groups;
- improve their negotiation skills.

Preparation:

- The specialist may ask the pupils to share their experiences with active listening during the past week.
- All the materials should be prepared in advance.
- The specialist will present the topic to the class.

Resources:

- list with positive and negative situations/ scenarios and illustrations of problems/ conflicts (see the annexes at pages 127-128);
- writing paper;
- pens, pencils, colouring pencils, eraser, sharpener, markers.

Main activity:

- The pupils are each provided with a set of cards depicting different emotions: e.g. joy, sadness, anger, disgust, fear etc. (the emoticons from the worksheet at page 91 may be used). The specialist presents the pupils with different positive and negative situations, while the pupils are asked to raise the emotion cards which reflect how each situation makes them feel.
- Next, the pupils are divided into groups of three and each group receives the worksheet with illustrations of different problems/ conflicts which may harm a relationship. Pupils need to cooperate and figure out what the problem is and how they can deal with it. They will write out/ draw their ideas on resolving the conflicts and then present them to the group.
- Alternatively, each group must choose one illustration and role play the situation and its solution in front of the group.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- After all small groups have presented their solutions, the pupils are invited to offer their feedback and identify the main guidelines of resolving conflicts. The specialist will point out the value of conflict in relationships and the main strategies to deal with conflict.
- A potential task for the following week may be to observe how they and others are handling conflicts in the relationships.

SITUATIONS WHICH MAY TRIGGER DIFFERENT EMOTIONS FOR DISCUSSIONS

Scenario 1:

You have asked your friend to lend you their scissors to do a project but now you don't know where they are.

Scenario 2:

You have got a brand new toy and your friend asks if they can play with it.

Scenario 3:

Your friend has fallen over and hurt his/ her leg. They are crying.

Scenario 4:

Your teacher asks you to solve a very difficult Math problem on the board.

Scenario 5:

Your mum has told you to get ready because she's driving you to your friend's house.

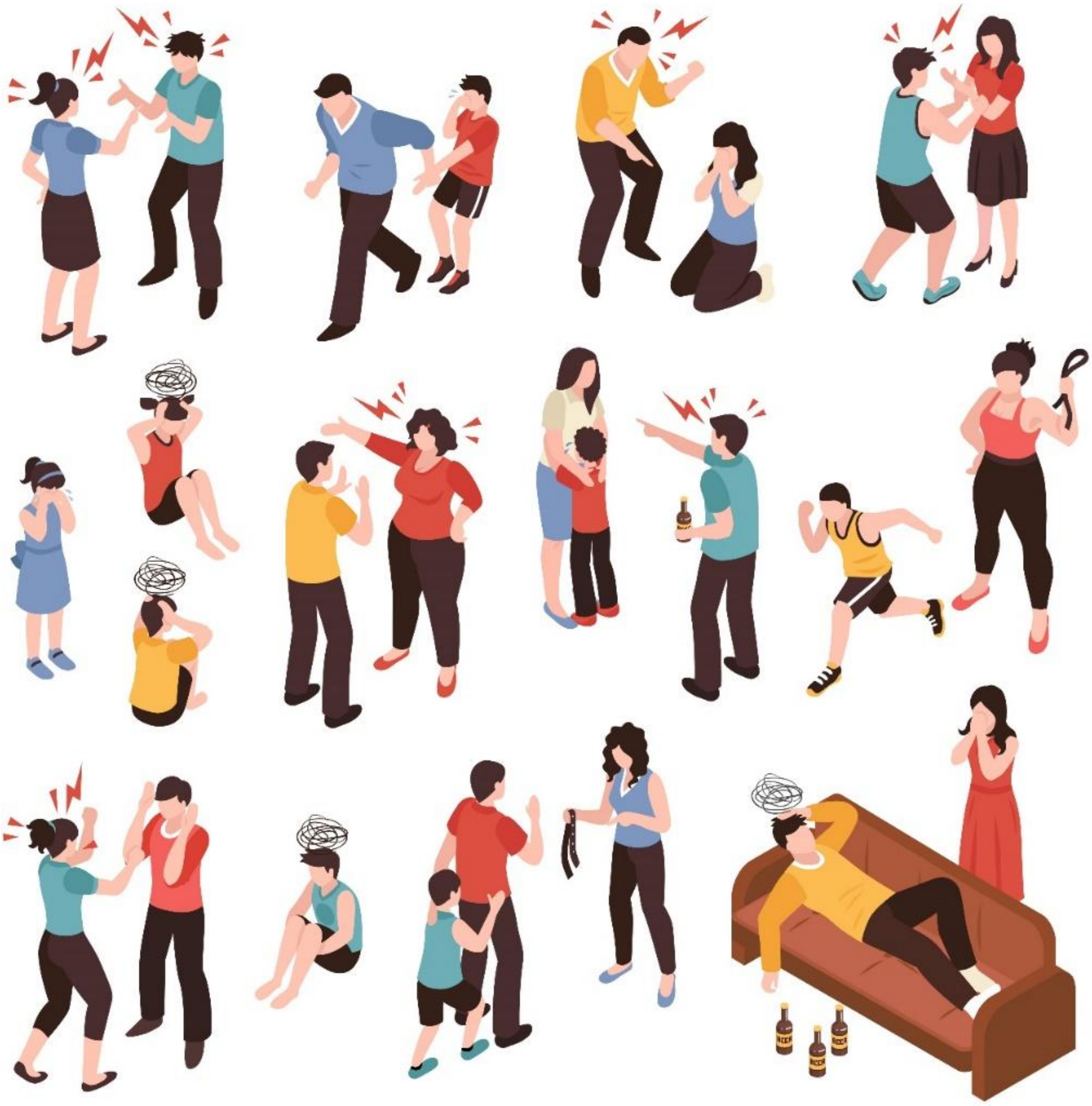
Scenario 6:

Your parents surprise you with a gift you really wanted for your birthday.

Scenario 7:

You have lent your favourite toy to your friend but he/ she has broken it.

CONFLICT ILLUSTRATIONS



GROUP SESSION 16

Title/ topic:

- Personal values

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- learn about the concept of personal values;
- identify their personal values;
- understand they should not compromise their values to please others;
- communicate their needs clearly and be able to maintain good relationships with others.

Preparation:

- The specialist may ask the pupils to share their experiences with observing the way they and others tend to solve conflicts in the relationships.
- All the materials should be prepared in advance.
- The specialist will present the topic to the class.

Resources:

- flipchart/ whiteboard;
- worksheet “The pyramid of values” (see the annex at page 130);
- writing paper, pens, pencils, colouring pencils, rubber, sharpener, eraser, markers;
- internet connection, laptop, video-projector and speakers.

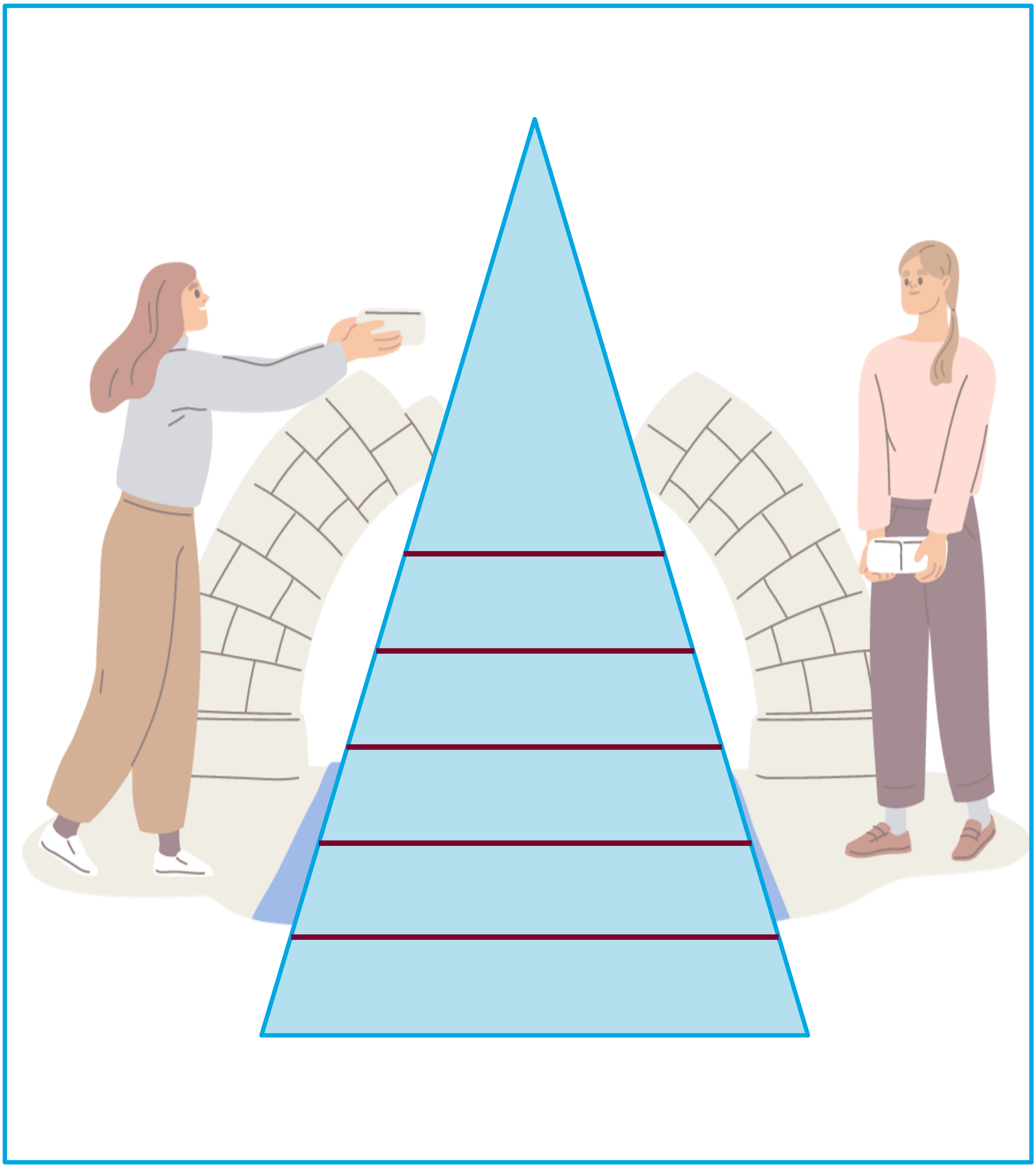
Main activity:

- As an introduction to the session, the specialist shows the pupils a video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=He9JqYX85qU) and discusses with the group the concept of personal values, pointing out the different values required to build a good relationship.
- The expert will then make a list on the whiteboard/ flipchart with different personal values. The pupils receive the worksheet “The pyramid of values” and they are asked to write down their most important six values according to their importance (the most important one will be on top) on the pyramid included in the worksheet. The goal is for each pupil to reflect upon his/ her values.
- Then the group is divided in workgroups of 3-4 pupils. The workgroups need to negotiate the personal values and come up with a top reflecting the main 6 values of all members. They then present their results to the group.
- The specialist discusses with the group the process of choosing the small group’s values from the members’ personal values. He/ she points out the elements of the process and the risks of renouncing the personal values in favour of others, as well as the risks of being inflexible when trying to join a group. The expert will stress the fact that similarities in personal values are the premises for initiating social relationships and compromises from one’s personal values in order to avoid conflicts or to please others are not necessary functional choices.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- The activity may be continued by creating a common hierarchy of social values for the whole group. The specialist may point out that all people that become members of social groups need to adhere to the social values of that group, but a balance between personal and social values is needed.

THE PYRAMID OF VALUES



GROUP SESSION 17

Title/ topic:

- Dealing with emotions in relationships

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results: by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- understand negative and positive aspects of relationships;
- learn that all emotions are valid but not all reactions are;
- be able to assist others in managing difficult situations;
- improve their communication skills.

Preparation:

- The specialist may ask the pupils to remember the common group values.
- All the materials should be prepared in advance.
- The specialist will present the topic to the class.

Resources:

- list with situations/ scenarios for the role play (see the annex at page 132);
- whiteboard/ flipchart;
- writing paper;
- pens, pencils, colouring pencils, sharpener, eraser, markers.

Main activity:

- The specialist divides the group in pairs and invites them to brainstorm about the positive and negative things in a relationship. The pupils will then share a few ideas, which the expert will list in two drawings (a cloud and a sun) made on the whiteboard/ flipchart sheet: the negative things of a relationship will be noted in a cloud, while the positive ones will be noted down in a sun. The expert should point out that relationships have their good and their difficult moments and that we benefit from learning how to navigate them all.
- Further on, the pupils are divided into groups of 4-5 and they are given situations which they are asked to role-play (relate to the characters) and in which one of the group members has to face some problems/ difficult situations in relationships, while the others take the role to support, to “think outside the box” of the situation and help them. Pupils need to cooperate to figure out how they can deal with the problem. They can write down all their ideas and then choose one idea they consider the most appropriate to present in front of the whole group.
- The specialist facilitates the sharing of opinions and feelings regarding the role play and points out healthy ways of validating emotions and offering support.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- The specialist highlights that all emotions are valid and acceptable. However, not all reactions are acceptable! Releasing intense emotions is healthy if done in an appropriate manner. While it is not okay to yell and scream at others, the act of yelling can be quite therapeutic. Providing children with a safe space to yell, followed by a healthy way of moving forward can be powerful.

SITUATIONS FOR THE ROLE PLAY

Scenario 1:

On a bus, an older kid demands that you change seats with his friend so they can sit together. You came early to get a window seat and don't like his friend's location.

Scenario 2:

Your friend does not want to play with you and he/ she seems to have some new friends and leaves you alone.

Scenario 3:

A friend has hurt your feelings by sharing your private secrets with another friend.

Scenario 4:

It's break time and you have forgotten your lunch at home. You're really hungry.

Scenario 5:

Someone has stolen all your pencils.

Scenario 6:

Your mum says that you cannot play any video games this weekend.

Final Session

GROUP SESSION 18

Title/ topic:

- Progress self-evaluation and lessons learnt

Therapeutic objectives/ expected results by participating in/ doing this activity, the children will:

- learn how to assess and summarize their learning experiences;
- be able to reflect and acknowledge their progress;
- be motivated to develop and grow further.

Preparation:

- The specialist should announce the group that this is the final meeting and its purpose is to self-reflect upon the progress and draw conclusions regarding the lessons learnt.

Resources:

- worksheet (see annex at page 134);
- writing paper, pens, pencils, colouring pencils, markers.

Main activity:

- The pupils are asked to remember the moment they started the group sessions and their level of expertise on emotional intelligence then and how they have progressed by participating in the group sessions and their current level of knowledge and skill regarding the components of emotional intelligence. They are asked to express their reflections by making use of their body while standing up, as if their body would be a thermometer or a vertical scale and point out with their hands their past level of knowledge and skill and then their current one.
- Further on, the pupils are asked to write down on the worksheet impressions and feelings regarding what they have learnt and experienced and ideas on how they plan to use their current level of knowledge and skill.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- In the end of the session, the pupils are invited to imagine that in the middle of the room there is a backpack that each of them will take on during their journey through life and each of them might put inside one important thing they wish to remember and continue to apply from the group sessions on emotional intelligence.

- As a continuation of the reflection upon the progress and the things they have learnt, the pupils might be instructed to:
    - design an individual/ group poster with rules or things they should keep doing in order to maintain their self- and social-awareness and to manage their emotions and their relationships;
    - create a journaling page (they may use drawings, symbols, words, stickers etc.) to remind them of the things they have learnt and the skills they have developed;
    - make a collage of photos with difficult emotions and potential ideas how to cope with them in a healthy and functional way.

WHAT DID I LEARN?	✋ WHAT WILL I APPLY?
☺ WHAT DID I LIKE?	☹ WHAT DID I NOT LIKE?

Parent support

9.1. The role of parents in the development of emotional intelligence

The family represents the first "social laboratory", in which the individual experiences his/ her first relationships with the social world and tests his/ her first social skills. All the things learnt about relationships during the childhood within the family environment will further be implemented and tested with the peers, with other adults, with romantic partners etc. But not all that we learn in the family works in the "outside social world" and not all that is functional will function right away. Most often than not the process of acquiring social skills is a sinuous one and scattered with heavy and sometimes painful emotional experiences and it requires repetitions and fine tuning throughout childhood, with the ability to understand and manage emotions playing a crucial part in this process.

Emotions may be roughly defined as inner responses which reflect our state in relation to a situation or a stimulus. Emotions are tri-dimensional, as they have three distinct components: a subjective experience, a physiological reaction and a behavioural response. According to the resemblance between emotions of different people in similar situations, we have managed to label them and categorize them, but they essentially remain personal and subjective. Still, we are able to recognize our own emotions due to the physiological clues we get from our body while feeling a certain emotion and, at the same time, we are able to recognize the other people's emotions, by processing their behavioural reactions.

Emotions are numerous, multifaceted and complex - some authors state that there are up to 28 distinct emotions, while others speak about thousands of distinguishable emotions. Either way, children are not able to identify and categorize them without help; they need guidance in recognizing and managing them on their own, just like we normally do when trying to teach them how to read and write.

Today we know that in order to live an emotionally satisfying life, it is essential to understand which emotion is showing up and it is helpful to recognize which one is showing up fully, for both pleasant and unpleasant emotions. Recognizing and addressing emotions in children is essential for their emotional development and well-being and parents are the most appropriate persons to do that, as they are the ones spending the most amount of time around their children and witnessing their emotions and contexts.

Recognizing and managing our own emotions helps us better understand the way we function and guides us towards inner self-regulating and behavioural adaptation processes which are beneficial on both psychological level and social level. Managing emotions does not mean controlling, repressing or masking them, but recognizing emotions and making sure that the resulting actions are appropriate to the situation.

The family is a system of members and relationships which function together as a whole, just like the components of a bicycle - any piece is important for the full functioning and if just one piece will change shape or place or the way it functions, then the whole system will be affected. Thus, it is not hard to guess that the emotional exchanges in a family are influenced by any of its members, even in situations in which those are not directly targeted by the actual communication. In this context, the ability to effectively manage emotions is of crucial importance for the well-being of all well-functioning of the whole family.

Emotional management is a component of the wider concept of emotional intelligence, which has been put on the map of psychological development by Daniel Goleman (1995) and has been since tackled by many other researchers and practitioners alike.

While emotional management is a lifelong journey, its roots are firmly established during childhood and the parents have a pivotal role in nurturing their children's emotional capacities and providing them with the tools to navigate effectively the complex landscape of emotions.

Regarding the parents' role in emotional management and its impact on child development, research in various fields, including psychology, neuroscience and sociology, provides valuable insights into this crucial aspect of parenting. A recent interesting study pointed out that parental emotional regulation significantly influences the way children cope with emotions, as they learn to emotional modelling (Edvoll et. Al, 2023), thus parents who model healthy emotional regulation behaviours tend to have children who are better at managing their own emotions.

Also, the attachment theory, developed by John Bowlby, emphasizes the importance of secure attachments between parents and children. Research conducted by Mary Ainsworth (1965, 1978) has shown that children with secure attachments to their caregivers are more likely to develop better emotional regulation skills.

Recent advances in neuroscience have revealed that brain development is highly impacted by early experiences and research suggests that nurturing and emotionally supportive parenting can have a positive influence on the brain, particularly in areas related to emotion regulation. Conversely, adverse childhood experiences, such as neglect or abuse, can have long-lasting negative effects on emotional management.

Science has established five main foundations on which emotional management relies on and all of them are related to the ways that parents act and choose to educate:

1. **Emotional modelling.** Children learn by observing the behaviour of those around them, primarily their parents. Parents serve as emotional role models for their children. When parents display healthy emotional management, children are more likely to emulate these behaviours. Conversely, parents who struggle with emotional regulation may inadvertently pass on these challenges to their children.
2. **Emotional validation.** Validating a child's emotions is essential. Parents should create an environment where their children feel safe expressing their feelings without judgement. By acknowledging a child's emotions and discussing them openly, parents help their children understand and accept their feelings, reducing the likelihood of emotional suppression or denial.
3. **Teaching emotion regulation.** Parents play a crucial role in teaching children how to regulate their emotions effectively. This involves strategies such as deep breathing, mindfulness and problem-solving. By imparting these skills, parents empower their children to cope with challenging emotions in a constructive way.
4. **Empathy and understanding.** Empathy, the ability to understand and share another person's feelings, is a core component of emotional intelligence. Parents can cultivate empathy in their children by listening actively, asking open-ended questions and encouraging their children to consider how others might feel in different situations.
5. **Conflict resolution.** Conflict is a natural part of life and parents can teach their children valuable conflict resolution skills. By demonstrating healthy communication and problem-solving during family conflicts, parents equip their children with essential tools to navigate disagreements in their own lives.

The role of parents in shaping their children's emotional management skills extends beyond childhood. As children grow into adults, the emotional foundation laid by their parents influences their ability to thrive in various aspects of life. Individuals with high emotional management capacities are often more resilient in the face of adversity, better building and maintaining healthy relationships and more effective in their careers. Thus, the role of parents in emotional management is a crucial and enduring one with profound implications for the overall development and happiness of their children.

9.2. The parents are the change they wish to see in their family universe

Parenting is a complex and multifaceted journey which extends far beyond the basics of providing care and sustenance. It involves shaping a child's character, values and emotional intelligence. Among the various elements of effective parenting, the concept of parental emotional modelling stands out as a fundamental and powerful force in a child's development and emotional well-being.

Parental emotional modelling refers to the process by which parents demonstrate and express their own emotions in front of their children. Children are astute observers and they learn how to understand and manage their own emotions by observing how their parents navigate theirs. This modelling can encompass a wide range of emotions, from happiness and excitement to frustration, anger and sadness.

The influence of parental emotional modelling is present on multiple levels regarding the emotions' disassembly:

- **emotional awareness** - children learn to recognize and name emotions by watching their parents; when parents openly express their feelings and label them (e.g. I'm feeling frustrated right now), children are more likely to develop a rich emotional vocabulary and an awareness of their own emotional states;
- **emotional expression** - parents serve as role models for how emotions can be expressed and managed; children who witness parents handling their emotions constructively are more likely to adopt healthy emotional expression patterns themselves; conversely, children who observe parents suppressing or explosively expressing their emotions may struggle to find effective ways to cope;
- **emotion regulation** - parental emotional modelling also plays a significant role in teaching children how to regulate their emotions; when parents demonstrate strategies for coping with stress or managing anger calmly, children internalize these techniques, enhancing their own emotional regulation skills;
- **empathy and understanding** - witnessing how parents react to other's emotions can foster empathy in children; when parents show compassion and understanding towards each other's feelings, children learn the importance of empathy and how to offer support to others in times of emotional need;
- **conflict resolution** - parents often model conflict resolution skills when they navigate disagreements or conflicts with their family; children who observe parents addressing conflicts respectfully and finding mutually satisfactory solutions are more likely to emulate these problem-solving approaches in their own relationships.

Drawing from these lines of influence, children who grow up in an emotionally expressive and supportive environment tend to have higher emotional intelligence, better mental health and healthier relationships in adulthood. They are more likely to navigate the complexities of life with resilience and empathy, both in personal and professional settings.

In order to provide a healthy and constructive personal emotional model, parents should focus on the following key aspects:

- ✓ ***self-awareness*** - parents must first develop their own self-awareness by understanding their emotions, triggers and patterns of emotional expression and this involves recognizing and acknowledging their feelings, both positive and negative; self-awareness is the foundation of effective emotional modelling;
- ✓ ***emotional regulation*** - parents should demonstrate healthy ways of managing their emotions and this includes techniques such as deep breathing, mindfulness and positive self-talk;
- ✓ ***emotion expression*** - parents should encourage open and honest emotional expression within the family and should feel comfortable discussing their feelings and, when appropriate, sharing them with their children; this helps children see that it's normal and healthy to express a wide range of emotions;
- ✓ ***showing empathy*** - parents should show empathy towards others, including their

children; when children are upset, the parents are supposed to acknowledge their feelings and validate their experiences and this practice teaches children the importance of understanding and supporting others' emotions;

- ✓ ***resolving conflicts effectively*** - modelling effective conflict resolution within the family includes listening actively, using "I" statements to express feelings and seeking mutually beneficial solutions; demonstrating respectful communication during disagreements sets a positive example for children;
- ✓ ***self-care*** - parents are supposed to highlight the importance of self-care and should prioritize their physical and emotional well-being, thus showing children that taking care of oneself is essential for maintaining a healthy emotional balance;
- ✓ ***seeking help when needed*** - it's important for parents to acknowledge when they need help with their own emotional challenges; seeking therapy or counselling when necessary sets a valuable example that seeking support is a healthy way to address emotional difficulties;
- ✓ ***consistency*** - is crucial in emotional modelling, as children learn from repeated behaviours and observations over time; therefore, parents should strive to maintain a consistent and positive emotional model in their daily lives;
- ✓ ***teaching coping strategies*** - parents should actively teach their children coping strategies for handling difficult emotions, by explaining how they manage their emotions and involve kids in age-appropriate practices; this helps children develop their emotional toolkit;
- ✓ ***communication*** - parents should foster open and effective communication within the family and encourage their children to ask questions about emotions and provide age-appropriate explanations; parents are supposed to create a safe space where their children can freely discuss their feelings.

Parental emotional modelling is a powerful and enduring force in child development. Parents who recognize their role as emotional models have the opportunity to shape their children's emotional intelligence and well-being positively. By focusing on their own behaviour first, parents can create an emotionally nurturing environment that empowers their children to develop essential tools for a successful and fulfilling life. Recognizing the significance of parental emotional modelling underscores the importance of cultivating emotionally healthy households that promote the emotional growth and resilience of the next generation.

Even though parents play a crucial role in the development of emotional intelligence, they should not be blamed or shamed if they sometimes fail to play their part in a constructive way. Bear in mind that parents want the best for their children and the decisions they take are meant to protect and nurture and even though sometimes overprotecting and pushing too hard for development in a certain direction might bring more harm than progress, they do not act like than on purpose. Parents are humans too, and sometimes they make mistakes, but they may be helped to find their track, by providing them correct information and access to specialised support for parenting and personal development.

9.3. Tools for parents who wish to raise emotional intelligent children

The parents' main tasks when helping their children recognize their emotions are to help them differentiate between the wide range of emotions experienced and to legitimize all emotions.

In order to efficiently solve the first task and help children differentiate between emotions, the parents may follow the next steps:

- **Observe the nonverbal cues.** Most of the times, children are not expressing their feelings verbally, because they are not capable to, but that doesn't mean that they do not feel emotions. Thus, parents should pay attention to their body language, facial expressions and tone of voice. These nonverbal cues can provide valuable insights into the children's emotions.

- **Ask open-end questions.** By asking questions that require more than a simple "yes" or "no" answer, parents will encourage open communication and may found out more about the inner context of the child. For example, parents may ask: "How are you feeling today?" or "Can you tell me what's been bothering you?" or “What has been the highlight of your day?”.
- **Make use of active listening techniques.** When a child does express their emotions, listen attentively without interrupting or immediately offering solutions. Show empathy and understanding by saying things like: "I see that you're feeling sad. Can you tell me more about why you feel this way?".
- **Label emotions.** Help children identify and name their emotions. Use simple language and age-appropriate terms. For example: "It looks like you're feeling frustrated because you couldn't solve that puzzle."
- **Use visual aids.** Younger children, especially, may benefit from visual aids like emotion cards or charts with faces displaying different emotions. This can help them associate feelings with specific expressions.

In order to contribute to dignifying and legitimizing all emotions, parents may choose to act as following:

- **Normalize emotions.** Let children know that all emotions are valid and a normal part of being human. Avoid judgment or shaming for expressing emotions, even if those emotions are negative.
- **Use personal examples.** Parents may find similar situation in their own lives in which they have felt in a similar way, especially for vulnerable or negative emotions. In this way, the children will understand that feelings are not shameful and they should allow themselves to feel them.
- **Read books and stories.** Reading books and stories that focus on emotions can be a helpful way to introduce and discuss different feelings. Ask questions about the characters' emotions to engage in conversations about emotions.
- **Teach coping strategies.** Once emotions are identified, teach children healthy ways to cope with them. Encourage deep breathing, taking a break or engaging in a calming activity like drawing or journaling. These practices will draw with themselves the conclusion that emotions are to be experienced, the only thing needed managing is how to express them in a proper and non-harmful way.
- **Model emotional expression.** It has pointed out before how children learn a lot by watching adults. Be a positive role model by expressing your own emotions in a healthy and constructive way. This can help children learn how to manage their feelings.
- **Create a safe environment.** Ensure that children feel safe and comfortable discussing their emotions with you. Foster an environment where they know they won't be judged or punished for sharing their feelings.

Remember that helping children recognize and name their emotions is a lifelong process. Encouraging open and honest communication about feelings can contribute to their emotional intelligence and overall well-being. If children consistently struggle with managing their emotions, if they exhibit extreme emotional reactions or if you're concerned about their mental health, consider seeking guidance from a child psychologist or counsellor.

Emotional intelligence does not mean people only feel happiness and satisfaction or just positive emotions! Being emotionally intelligent means that one is able to regulate all negative emotions and prevent those to disturb one’s emotional balance.

9.4. Workshop plans

Introductory workshop

WORKSHOP 1

Title/ topic:

- Why parents should wish for emotional intelligent children and how to achieve that?

Expected results: by participating at this activity, the parents will:

- learn about the concept of emotional intelligence and its components;
- be aware of their role in developing their children’s emotional intelligence;
- be able to apply tools and techniques in order to recognize and manage their own emotions;
- be able to apply tools and techniques in order to support their children to recognize and manage their own emotions;
- feel motivated to engage in educational strategies and measures in order to develop their children’s emotional intelligence.

Preparation:

- The trainer should choose a spacious room in which the space may be easily reorganized and the participants may to sit in a circle, so they may see each other.
- The trainer welcomes the participants, introduces himself/ herself and asks the workshop participants to do the same.
- The trainer asks the group of parents to share how they feel in the present moment and writes down the names of different emotions on the flipchart. The variability of the emotions will be the starting point of the workshop.

Resources:

- whiteboard/ flipchart sheets and markers;
- sticky notes, A4 sheets;
- pens/ pencils;
- video-projector, laptop.

Main activity:

- The trainer will make a short presentation about human emotions and about the concept of emotional intelligence, pointing out the need of developing this skill in children and the role of the parents in this endeavour.
- He/ she asks the participants to write down on a sticky note their biggest fear as a parent (the notes will be anonymous). Then the trainer asks them to stick the notes on a flipchart sheet or on a wall and read them out loud, before addressing them by pointing out how common some fears are, how love for somebody makes us fearful of not losing that person etc.
- The trainer opens ups a discussion by asking the participants to share how they cope with their fears as parents. Their solutions will be written down on the flipchart. The trainer discusses each solution and points out the need of being self-aware and self-empowered before tackling the development of the children’s emotional intelligence.
- The group will be divided in pairs and the participants are asked to share with their partners a current difficulty that they have with their children and how they address it. The partner should also share a point of view and a solution that he/ she might

apply if he/ she would have the same difficulty. Then they should switch roles. After completing this phase of the exercise, each pair will join another (thus forming groups of four) and share ideas about approaching difficulties with children. The groups of four will then summarize their discussion and share their conclusions with the big group (it may be orally or in a written form - on a flipchart sheet). ➢ The trainer summarizes all conclusions and points out the importance of communication as a tool to identify solutions and to empower. ➢ The parents are then asked to write a note to themselves on a sticky note, by completing the phrase: "I am a good parent, because…"
Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period: ➢ The trainer will ask the participants to imagine there is a big basket in the middle of the room and they should put in there one important idea they leave the workshop with (it may also be one word reflecting their experience or what they have learnt). ➢ The trainer will wrap up the session by offering a motivational message in order to inspire parents to act as emotional intelligence developers for them and their children. ➢ Keeping a journal of emotions, of meaningful experiences with their children and of important insights regarding the development of emotional intelligence might also be an inspiring and motivating task for the parents, while it provides documentation of their trials, errors and successes in guiding the development of their children and may constitute topics for further workshops and discussions.

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SELF-AWARENESS

WORKSHOP 2

Title/ topic:

- Self-awareness - the role of parents in indentifying children's emotions

Expected results: by participating at this activity, the parents will:

- get familiar with the concept of emotional intelligence and its four dimensions;
- get familiar with the world of emotions and their role in human life;
- understand the specificity of emotional development in children;
- be able to support the children in recognizing their emotions.

Preparation:

- The trainer welcomes the participants.
- The trainer presents the thematic range of the parent workshops and the content of the current workshop.

Resources:

- whiteboard/ flipchart sheets and markers;
- sticky notes, A4 sheets;
- pens/ pencils;
- video-projector, laptop.

Main activity:

- The trainer conducts a mini-lecture on the concept of emotional intelligence and its four dimensions/ components.
- The trainer presents a definition of emotions, then divides the participants into groups consisting of 2-3 persons and distributes sticky notes asking them to write down the emotions expressed by their children - one emotion on one note. Then the participants read the names of the emotions and stick the notes to the board - creating a spectrum of emotions. The trainer supplements other emotions that the participants have not mentioned.
- It is important that the following basic emotions are indicated: joy, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, shame and disgust. The following may be evoked: Robert Plutchik's Wheel of Emotions or the Feelings Wheel designed by Kaitlin Robbs.
- The trainer gives a mini lecture on how the emotions are formed - neuro-mechanics of emotions, cortical and subcortical brain structures responsible for the formation of emotions. Then, in a discussion with participants, the trainer defines the role of basic emotions in human life.
- It is important to emphasize that emotions arise automatically and that they constitute reactions to what we experience - they quickly provide us with information. It should be stressed that emotions cannot be classified as bad or good, even though some are more pleasant while others are unpleasant, and that every emotion is important - e.g. anger informs about the violation of our boundaries; sadness informs us that we have lost something that is important to us, allows us to rest and receive support; anxiety/ fear protects us from danger; shame informs us that we have transgressed

some norms; joy informs us of a sense of accomplishment and happiness, gives us a lot of energy and brings us closer to other people.

- The trainer gives a mini lecture on the emotional development in childhood, focusing on the children aged 6-10 years old. The children at this age face one of the biggest challenges encountered so far: going to school. They need to adapt to the school tasks, to the new rhythm of learning efforts and to the new social demands that arise in the school environment. During this period, it is very important for the children to understand that their parents are on the same team as they are (often, children feel that parents side with the teachers against them) and offer they full support.
- The trainer divides the participants into groups of four. Each group receives a large flipchart paper sheet and it is asked to discuss the parents' role in supporting the children in recognizing and naming the experienced emotions and to write their ideas down. Next, each group presents their findings to all the participants. The trainer should point out the important ideas for parents to keep in mind, completing the presentations of the workgroups with relevant information.
- At the end of the workshop, the trainer invites participants to a debriefing round: thoughts and reflections that accompany participants after this workshop.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- The trainer suggests the use of an Emotion Log: work with the child to create a map of his/ her emotions. There will be a separate page dedicated for each day of exercise - half of the page should be filled with situations and emotions experienced by the child and the other half by the emotions that the parent recognised in their child at that time. At the end of each day, the parent and the child should talk about the emotions felt by the child on that day and compare their observations. The parent will be the one completing the Emotions Log, which may be kept for a dozen days or so.

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SELF-MANAGEMENT

WORKSHOP 3

Title/ topic:

- Self-management - helping parents gain insight on their children's self-management skills

Expected results: by participating at this activity, the parents will:

- understand the specifics of self-management during childhood;
- be aware of the importance of them being role models for their children;
- be able to support the children in recognising and managing their emotions.

Preparation:

- The trainer welcomes the participants.
- The trainer discusses the thematic range of the parent workshops and details the topic for the current workshop.

Resources:

- worksheet "Emotion regulation for adults" (see annex at page 146);
- whiteboard/ flipchart sheets and markers;
- sticky notes, A4 sheets;
- pens/ pencils;
- video-projector, laptop.

Main activity:

- The trainer reiterates Daniel Goleman's concept of emotional intelligence and describes its four dimensions, focusing especially on the concept of self-management in childhood.
- It will be useful for the trainer to touch upon the emotional difficulties children face during their first years of school, as well as the challenges adults around them face during that period as well. Children at this age are not fully equipped with self-management skills, because they can't always recognize their emotions or even if they do, they don't know how to deal with them in order to regulate them.
- The trainer can outline some basic self-management skills achievable in childhood: monitoring rules (e.g. of a game), keeping focus on a task (e.g. counting forward/ backward, colouring), monitoring time (e.g. keep a log of their activities and how long they last), setting goals and monitoring them (e.g. something they wish to learn), delaying gratification (e.g. saving a candy for later), delaying action/ controlling impulses (e.g. waiting a minute before acting, waiting 10 seconds before saying something) etc.
- Then, the parents, individually or in groups, write down on the sticky notes the respective self-management skills they have noticed in their children - or the lack thereof (meaning that deficits should be brought up and discussed as well).
- It would be good to follow up this exercise with a short discussion on how the parents handle these skills or lack thereof (e.g. do they praise their children for successes and desired skills? Do they only focus on the problems? How do they try to help their children in developing or furthering their self-management skills?).

- The trainer hands out the worksheet "Emotion regulation for adults" and invites participants to think of a situation where they had to handle their own emotions and fill in the questions individually. This exercise aims to help them reflect on their own behaviour and self-management skills. A short discussion about what was written down can then follow (e.g. finding common behaviours or reactions, discussing best ways to handle difficult situations etc.).
- It is important to emphasise that this exercise might bring forth some difficult emotions for the parents themselves, and that, if someone doesn't want to share what they have written down, they are not obliged to. It is also important for the trainer to remind everyone not to judge their peers, but to exercise openness and understanding among each other.
- The trainer then briefly touches upon the subject of modelling as an important parenting tool. On the basis of their vulnerability, all children tend to look up to the others around them and to copy the behaviours they see. Thus, it is easier to lead children towards development through coherent behaviour rather than through preaching.
- The trainer then divides participants into groups. Each group is given a large sheet of flipchart paper and should discuss and write down ideas about how can parents help their children enhance their self-management skills and regulate their emotions. Each group then presents their findings to the forum. The trainer can add concrete strategies that haven't been mentioned.
- At the end of the workshop, the trainer invites participants to a debriefing round: participants should reflect on how they feel after today's workshop, what they learnt, what stuck out the most.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- Prompted by the ideas and discussions about self-management strategies to help their children boost their self-management skills, parents are encouraged to pick out one or more that they believe would work for them and their children and put it into action at home. Such strategies could be:
    - inviting children to delay their actions or gratifications;
    - suggesting games in which children may practice their impulse control or the capacity to monitor rules;
    - helping children make a "to-do" list/ a schedule, in order to help them set goals and monitor time;
    - offering children the opportunity to share their emotions, to understand and discuss them;
    - prompting the children to remain focused despite the storms of emotions and leading them through self-analysis and introspection with the help of questions;
    - setting up a daily affirmations jar, in order to help their children start their days on a good note and feel supported etc.

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EMOTION REGULATION FOR ADULTS

This worksheet is designed to help you recognize your emotions. Using an example in your life, complete the following worksheet and practice analyzing your emotions from the situation.

What happened?

Why did this situation happen?

How did you feel, both physically and emotionally?

What thoughts did you have in that moments?

How did you want to react to this situation?

How did you react?

Was it clear from your reactions for the people around you how you felt and what you thought?

How did your emotions and actions affect you later?

SOCIAL AWARENESS

WORKSHOP 4

Title/ topic:

- Social awareness - how to help children develop it

Expected results: by participating at this activity, the parents will:

- learn the basics about the concept of social awareness;
- be aware of their social environment and learn how to use it as an example and learning tool to train children's social awareness;
- get ideas for fostering social awareness at home.

Preparation:

- The trainer welcomes the participants.
- The trainer discusses the thematic range of the parent workshops and details the topic for the current workshop.
- It may be useful to recap the sequence of work and spend a few minutes on the previous content, namely the concepts of self-awareness and self-management.

Resources:

- whiteboard/ flipchart sheets and markers;
- sticky notes, A4 sheets;
- pens/ pencils;
- video-projector, laptop.

Main activity:

- The trainer explains the concept of social awareness.
- Before specifying the concept of social awareness in detail, the trainer will stimulate the group of parents to share on the possible meaning of the term *social awareness*. It might be helpful to ask a parent to come and take some notes on the board of what is being said in the attempts of defining social awareness.
- Once there has been some sharing, the reference definition is proposed: the ability to accurately notice the emotions of others and "read" situations appropriately. It is about sensing what other people are thinking and feeling, about being able to take their perspective and using one own capacity for empathy; it is the ability to sense, understand and react to the emotions of others within social situations.
- The trainer asks the group if the definition expands what they shared and if there is anything that strikes them. If there is an atmosphere of trust created within the group, which favours sharing experiences, the trainer may try to bring up the situation of the parent who has been previously invited to write on the whiteboard/ flipchart and ask how he/ she felt and how the group thinks he/ she felt.
- Alternatively, the trainer may prepare a photocopy of the definition and ask one person from the group to stand up and come in front of the room and read it in front of everyone. Then, the trainer may use the reader's experience to stimulate the group of parents to ask how that person felt.
- In any case, the core idea of this task is to let the group experience there and then the theoretical concept of social awareness.

- Empathy is the key to understanding social situations. The trainer will make the theoretical transition from social awareness to empathy - the latter being the ability to put ourselves in the other's shoes, to think and feel "as if" we were the other person. The trainer points out the usefulness and importance of this skill in all contexts, private and professional (e.g. in a couple, in sports, in business etc.).
- The trainer asks the group to share a few examples of situations in which participants used empathy to connect to other people or in which they noticed that another person used empathic skills to connect to them.
- The trainer divides the group in pairs, favouring pairing with strangers/ people one has never interacted before. The participants are asked to take turns in telling each other in 3-5 minutes about a movie, TV series or book they read, stressing the parts that had the biggest emotional impact on them. The listener may ask questions to get more details on the aspects he/ she thinks are more important. After the narrator has finished, the listener will expose what he/ she thinks were the predominant emotions that the narrator experienced (for example, he/ she may start by saying "If I listened well...."). After both persons in the pairs have been both narrators and listeners, the participants may share a few reflections regarding their experiences with the whole group.
- The trainer should stress the idea that it is important to pay attention not only to the content or the events in a certain situation, but also to the emotional experiences of the participants and, in order to do that, one needs to recollect and connect with his/ her own similar past experiences.
- The next sequence of the workshop focuses on using empathy to connect with children's emotions. The trainer will present a selection of short videos with children in different situations (they may include sound or not) and then asks the participants (in a frontal manner or in workgroups) to state what is each child feeling, thinking, needing in that particular moment.
- Further on, the trainer will explain the particularities of children's emotions and that emotional manifestations are messages, directed to oneself and/ or to the others, about how that person is in a certain moment. Understanding emotions means understanding personal needs and actions and acting accordingly. Empathy has to do less with certain words and more with attuning to one another and feeling together. If considered appropriate, the trainer may lead the discussion towards healthy and unhealthy reactions in certain situations involving emotions.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- At the end of the workshop, the trainer invites the participants to share what they take home from the session.
- Also, the trainer might divide the group in small workgroups again and have the small groups discuss what they have learnt and what they think they will apply onwards and write the conclusions of these reflections on a flipchart sheet.

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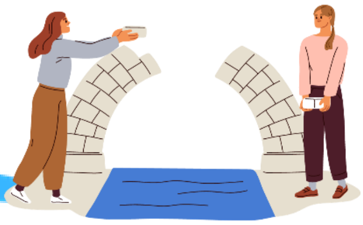
RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT



WORKSHOP 5
Title/ topic: ➢ Relationship management - a pathway to success
Expected results: by participating at this activity, the parents will: ➢ be able to communicate effectively verbally and non-verbally; ➢ enhance their ability to take decisions in groups; ➢ improve their negotiation skills.
Preparation: ➢ The trainer welcomes the participants. ➢ The trainer discusses the thematic range of the parent workshops and details the topic for the current workshop. ➢ It will be useful to make use of a spacious room and have the chairs arranged in a circular setting, so that the participants may face each other. **Resources:** ➢ whiteboard/ flipchart sheets and markers; ➢ sticky notes, A4 sheets; ➢ pens/ pencils; ➢ video-projector, laptop; ➢ oranges.
Main activity: ➢ The trainer explains that communication and cooperation skills, as well as caring and tolerance attitudes are key characteristics in order to initiate and maintain functional relationships at any age. Also, these skills and attitudes play an important part in building the children's confidence that their contribution matters and that they can make a difference in their life and their community. ➢ The trainer divides the group in small workgroups and invites the participants to brainstorming as many ideas as they can about how to involve children in activities in which they might learn how to take care of others. All the ideas will be written down on flipchart sheets and presented to the group. The trainer will summarize the ideas and will point out the most efficient or the most innovative ones. ➢ The trainer explains the principles of attachment and the importance of feeling safe for the overall development of a child and especially towards structuring strong cooperation, communication and decision making skills. ➢ Further on, the trainer divides the group in pairs and invites them to play the "orange exercise". Each pair receives an orange and the partners should argument their right to possess the orange. They are encouraged to be as creative as they can and to take a decision about who should own the orange in a given amount of time (10-15 minutes). For more complexity, the participants may be told that they are not allowed to divide the orange among them. At the end of the exercise, a quick overview of the participants' experience during this exercise is done, while the trainer will point out the importance of negotiation skills. Negotiation is a process by which agreement is reached while avoiding conflict. However, having great negotiation skills is not just

about one's ability to win an argument. In fact, successful negotiation helps people build stronger relationships with others and, therefore, improve their emotional intelligence. Negotiation fosters goodwill despite a difference in interests and teaches people to respect the concerns of all sides in a conflict. It also helps avoid future conflicts by leaving both parties equally satisfied, with no barriers to communication.

- The trainer will divide the group into small groups of 4-5 people. Each group needs to create a short text about a certain topic (e.g. a story inspired from the animal world on how to explain to children the importance of cooperation; a creative recipe for teamwork; a poem about the importance of diplomacy and politeness) that they will share with the other groups at the end. The idea of the exercise is to employ various communication skills and create a collaborative experience in order to inspire the participants to teach communication and cooperation at home. At the end of the activity, after all the texts have been presented, the trainer will invite participants to share their experience of working in the small group, by asking about their feelings, their thoughts, their impressions regarding what was easy or difficult, the way they have organized their task, what can they apply etc.
- Alternatively, the task for each group can be to come up with four words describing a particular topic (e.g. illustrated in a picture). Then, two groups would combine and their task would be to reach an agreement on which four words to use. This exercise will help them see that, although a common view is not usually present at the beginning of a task, it can be created if all parties work together. At the end of the activity, after all the words have been presented, the trainer will invite participants to share their experience of working in the small group, by asking about their feelings, their thoughts, their impressions regarding what was easy or difficult, the way they have organized their task, what can they apply etc.
- The final activity is focused on decision making. The trainer reads out loud pairs of similar or complementary objects and the participants need to decide individually which object they would like to be (e.g. *Would you be a hammer or a nail? A mouse or a cat? A potato or a tomato? A door or a window? A house or a yard? A bridge or a wall?*). In each round, the trainer will invite a few participants to share and explain their choices.

Reflection/ discussion/ tasks for the following period:

- At the end of the workshop, the trainer gives the participants the opportunity to share impressions, lessons learnt from the workshops and what they think they will apply at home - individually or in small groups, orally or in writing, on post its or flipchart sheets.

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Cross-cultural best practices

The final chapter of this model is dedicated to best practices of emotional intelligence development in Europe and around the world, providing references for further documentation. This chapter is not designed for teachers, professionals or parents alone, but also for all the stakeholders involved in the education systems and for the whole community who could organize itself around the values of developing emotional intelligence.

BEST PRACTICE 1

COUNTRY: ITALY

Title/ topic:

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AS AN EDUCATIONAL-RELATIONAL METHOD IN DISTANCE LEARNING: WORK CARRIED OUT BY THE PUPILS OF 1ST B AND 1ST C OF CAMPORA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Description:

In primary school education, storytelling and fairy-tale imagination play a fundamental role in learning and developing emotional intelligence. This is why the Comprehensive Institute “Campora S.G. - Aiello C.” from Amantea has used the fairy tale technique as a therapeutic activity in workshops held both in the classroom and at a distance. By using the metaphor of the dualism protagonist/ antagonist - good/ bad, the children were able to develop the emotional literacy necessary for empathic development. In particular, the pupils were asked to create and invent stories so that they could identify with the events of the characters presented.

The work was carried out in a three-stage process. The first phase involves, through the use of the platform adopted by the school for video lessons, listening to the thematic story about Covid-19 (better known as the Coronavirus) depicted as an evil King that has overwhelmingly become part of our lives. This is the fairy tale incipit that kicks off the second phase, in which the pupils created their very own story, making it a powerful learning tool. The third and final phase deals with translating the metaphorical language presented by the pupils into disciplinary content, becoming a tool for the harmonious development of the personality. In the various stages of constructing the story together with the children, various working techniques were used, such as cooperative learning and brainstorming, in order to increase peer support and emotional closeness in the pupils in order to learn to communicate with empathy.

The primary aim of the workshop was, therefore, to facilitate the development of empathy. In fact, the distance learning allowed the emotionally more intelligent pupil to develop strong resilience and the one with more difficulties to open up more. It was demonstrated how, through experiential workshops and the use of different learning techniques, pupils were motivated to overcome the emotional distress expressed at the beginning of the year. Very important is the role of the expert who, by pushing the hemisphere of creativity, adaptation and divergent thinking, ensured that the pupils kept their attention on the project.

Link:

https://www.comprensivocampora-aiello.edu.it/attivita-alunni/1161-intelligenza-emotiva-come-metodo-educativo-relazionale-nella-didattica-a-distanza-lavori-eseguiti-dagli-alunni-della-1-b-e-1-c-della-scuola-primaria-di-campora.html

BEST PRACTICE 2

COUNTRY: ITALY

Title/ topic:

ACTIVITIES ON EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE AND EMPATHY - A STORM OF EMOTIONS (RECOGNITION OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EMOTIONS)

Description:

The activity was carried out by the Comprehensive Institute “Bastiano Genovese” in Messina on secondary school pupils in order to help them understand the difference between primary and secondary emotions. The activity can be carried out in the classroom, as well as with other age-relevant social groups.

The pupils were divided into small groups and were asked to write down all the emotions that come to their minds in a limited amount of time (about 5 minutes). The teachers then stopped them and guided them to the next stage of the assignment: for each emotion on the paper they were asked to add a moment/ a situation when they have felt it (about 10-15 minutes). Then each group choose a spokesperson, who spoke on behalf of all and the teacher then asked each group to share what they have written down. From what the children have reported the teacher led the discussion towards differentiating the types of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, fear, anger, disgust and surprise are primary emotions) and stimulated the pupils to come up with a definition of secondary emotions (e.g. shame, jealousy, embarrassment, guilt etc.). Primary emotions are more naturally occurred (and they are the first to appear in small children) and most of the times unconscious, while secondary emotions require self-awareness, which implies consciousness, a “sense of me” and awareness of the others. This activity helps students recognize and understand the differences between primary and secondary emotions

The activity involves students and teachers in formulating some questions and food for thought like:

- In what situations do you experience emotions?
- Can you experience different emotions at the same moment? Why/ why not?
- Are there similar situations that arouse different emotions? Why/ why not?
- What are the differences between primary and secondary emotions?

The same activity may also be proposed to younger pupils, but adapting it, for example by using images of faces expressing primary emotions and using a simpler age-appropriate language.

Links:

https://www.icgenovese.it/
https://www.icgenovese.it/Attivit%C3%A0%20su%20competenza%20emotiva%20ed%20empatia.pdf

BEST PRACTICE 3

COUNTRY: CYPRUS

Title/ topic:

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE OF EDUCATORS APPOINTED IN CYPRIOT PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND IN-SCHOOL CONFLICT MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

Description:

Nowadays, emotional intelligence has become ever more crucial and relevant to the teaching profession. Nonetheless, its role in in-school conflict incident management involving educators has not been sufficiently investigated, either in Greek or Cypriot secondary schools. This dissertation examined the emotional intelligence of educators appointed in Cypriot public secondary schools as well as in-school conflict management techniques, both on a theoretical level and research-wise. Subsequently, it explored the correlation between the degree of emotional intelligence of educators and their choice of technique for effectively handling a conflict incident. The occurrence of conflict among members of the school workforce is neither avoidable nor rare a phenomenon. Thus, emotions as well as the techniques employed to manage such outbreaks are of the utmost importance in order to successfully resolve them.

According to scientific literature, in-school conflicts are distinguished in different types, are caused by various factors, follow certain development stages and are managed with such techniques as avoidance, domination, collaboration, compromise and smoothing. Irrespective of its theoretical approach, the impact of emotional intelligence is deemed as decisive by researchers both in terms of the process of understanding, managing and normalising the emotions of others during the conflict, and the choice of a suitable conflict management technique so that the consequences for the parties involved and the school alike are not adverse but, rather, advantageous.

Firstly, this dissertation, through self-referencing questionnaires, provided an assessment of the emotional intelligence of educators, studied the frequency, intensity and the causes leading to in-school conflicts and, finally, evaluated the management techniques employed by educators to settle their differences. Furthermore, a link between the degree of emotional intelligence of educators and the choice of conflict management technique was established. IV Through the statistical analysis of the data gathered, the high degree of emotional intelligence in educators has been ascertained, with women outclassing men. Moreover, it was established that educators view conflict as a frequent phenomenon in the school environment, which they describe as mild and support that its most common cause is poor communication. In addition, the study has shown that the technique of cooperation is the first choice for the majority of educators dealing with in-school conflict management and resolution. Furthermore, it was revealed that older, more experienced educators were more emotionally intelligent than younger, less seasoned ones. Regarding the choice of conflict management technique, it was determined that an educator's age and years of service affect the manner in which they opt to handle in-school conflicts. Finally, according to the research data, there was positive correlation between emotional intelligence and the technique of collaboration.

Link:

http://hephaestus.nup.ac.cy/handle/11728/11446

BEST PRACTICE 4

COUNTRY: CYPRUS

Title/ topic:

STUDENTS' SELF ASSESSMENT ON EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND SELF AWARENESS

Description:

The data base offers an array of scientific articles regarding researches conducted on students' emotional intelligence, pointing out the vital role that emotional intelligence plays in the development of healthy and balanced personalities of children as well as in their future success, development and happiness. The studies are also underlining the significance of parents and educators in the development of children's emotional skills and the qualities of highly emotionally intelligent people, such as, empathy, social skills, autonomy and the benefits of emotionally adequate people.

The articles present theoretical frameworks and different perspectives on emotional intelligence, evaluation techniques, social and emotional education programmes that may be implemented by teachers, counsellors or even parents.

Adults in general and parents especially play the biggest part in the children's emotional intelligence development, due to the fact they are often regarded as role models. Scientific evidence is provided for the idea that parents who act as 'emotional mentors' and aim at the implementation of emotional education, are capable to give value to all the emotions their children experience, while identifying their emotions and using the expression of emotions as a way of bonding with their children and of supporting them through consultative intervention.

Links:

https://gnosis.library.ucy.ac.cy/handle/7/65083

https://gnosis.library.ucy.ac.cy/handle/7/65025

https://gnosis.library.ucy.ac.cy/handle/7/65028

https://gnosis.library.ucy.ac.cy/handle/7/65217

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BEST PRACTICE 5

COUNTRY: GREECE

Title/ topic:

CONNECTION BETWEEN ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, CLASSROOM CLIMATE AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Description:

Emotional intelligence as a personality trait refers to one's behavioural predispositions and personal assessments of one's abilities. The purpose of the present research was to study emotional intelligence as a characteristic of pre-adolescent children who attend the last two grades of Primary School. More specifically, it investigates how two dimensions of children's school life - school performance (cognitive dimension) and classroom climate (emotional dimension) - are related to emotional intelligence as a characteristic of children.

The survey involved 499 students (276 girls and 223 boys) from 17 public elementary schools in the wider area of the centre of Athens, of which 224 were studying in the 5th grade and 275 in the 6th grade. The students completed (a) the Emotional Intelligence as a Characteristic Knowledge Questionnaire for Children-Short Version, which is the Greek translation-adaptation of the Trait Emotional Intelligence-Child Short Form questionnaire (Petrides personal website, http://www.psychometriclab.com) and (b) the Questionnaire "Life in the School Classroom", which is the Greek translation-adaptation of the Classroom Life Measure questionnaire (Johnson & Johnson, 1983. Johnson, Johnson, Buckman, & Richards, 1985. Vogiatzoglou & Galanaki, 2008. Galanaki, 2005. Babalis, 2009. Babalis, Galanaki, & Stavrou, 2007). The teachers completed the School Performance Scale, which assesses the school performance of the students in the subjects of Mathematics, Language and History.

The children had high overall emotional intelligence as a characteristic, they performed well in lessons and they evaluated their classroom climate positively. Specifically, they reported that their classroom teacher supports them both academically and personally and that they do not feel alienated from the classroom. Overall emotional intelligence as a trait was not found to be related to children's school performance. It found that children with high trait emotional intelligence were likely to report high levels of cooperation, and children attending a classroom characterized by high levels of cohesion were likely to have high trait emotional intelligence. The findings are discussed in the context of the relevant international literature on children's emotional intelligence and its relationships with children's school life. Finally, proposals for pedagogical applications are formulated, based on the findings of this research.

Link:

https://www.didaktorika.gr/eadd/handle/10442/39119

www.freepik.com

BEST PRACTICE 6

COUNTRY: GREECE

Title/ topic:

THE EFFECT OF A SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING PROGAMME ON THE EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE OF PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Description:

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the effect of a social and emotional learning programme on the emotional intelligence of primary school students. Moreover, this study investigated the effect of the program on students' classroom climate, mental resilience and academic performance, as well as the differentiation based on class and gender.

The research involved one hundred forty-five (145) students from the fourth and sixth grades of primary schools of Attica, who were divided into two groups: the experimental group with seventy-five (75) students, who attended in the context of the course Greek Language an intervention program called "Eumenides", and the control group with seventy (70) students. All students completed in three administrations (pre-test, post-test and follow-up) the subsequent questionnaires: a) Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire: Child Form (TEIQue-CF), b) Classroom Life Measure (CLM), c) Classroom Maps and d) Demographic Characteristics Questionnaire. Moreover, students' scores were taken into account.

The results showed statistically significant differences and correlations between the variables. Students' emotional intelligence in the experimental group improved significantly, which, also, improved classroom climate and their mental resilience and academic performance. The program had a greater impact on students of sixth grade and girls, which remained statistically significant even on the follow-up. These findings must be taken into account by those involved in the educational scene for creating responsible and psychosocially balanced students.

Link:

https://www.didaktorika.gr/eadd/handle/10442/44173

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BEST PRACTICE 7

COUNTRY: GREECE

Title/ topic:

CREATIVE, INTERACTIVE PSYCHO-EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN OF PRIMARY SCHOOL, TO ENHANCE THE ROBUST ACTION AND THE FORMATION OF THEIR EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE

Description:

The concept of prevention of mental health care is a component of study and research in the fields of social sciences in the last decades. Adults, who work with children as professionals, pay particular attention to factors, which are not limited in the field of knowledge acquisition alone, but extended to the cultivation of those skills, that will help young people develop themselves into empowered adults mentally. The cultivation of virtues contained in the meaning of emotional intelligence will give the students an opportunity to discover positive personality traits, as well as positive emotions, inherent both to themselves and their peers.

This study examines the applicability and the degree of effectiveness of a creative, interactive psycho-educational program for children of primary school, to enhance the robust action and the formation of their emotional resilience. In the program, which lasted almost for a year and a half (pilot phase and main survey), took part 362 children in total, aged 9 - 10 years. The program was delivered in the school class once or twice a week (intervention) and it lasted for one school hour. Each intervention consisted of playful exercises and original creative activities based on the principles of cognitive-behavioural therapy and were designed specifically to meet the objectives of each intervention and to be manageable by students regarding their age. Furthermore, the content of the intervention program was adapted to the program of each elementary school, was applied. The analysis of the results supports the effectiveness of the program and demonstrates its suitability for children of primary school.

Link:

https://www.didaktorika.gr/eadd/handle/10442/39286

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BEST PRACTICE 8

COUNTRY: POLAND

Title/ topic:

PREVENTION AND TREATMENT PROGRAMMES FOR SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Description:

In Poland, there has been a noticeable increase in the publication of books with ready-made preventive and therapeutic programmes for school-age children. Professionals/teachers have increasing access to ready-made lesson plans developing, among other things, emotional intelligence. The books are divided into individual lessons, which include: the aims of the lesson, the theory of the topic discussed as well as a description of the exercises (step by step).

In addition to the books, folders with ready-made worksheets are issued at the same time, which professionals/teachers can use as described in the book or introduce them as a tool for their own lesson plans. It is worth noting that the worksheets are immediately adapted for use in the classroom (the student worksheets are on soft paper so that they can be easily photocopied, while the presentation worksheets are made on stiff paper, laminated).

Examples:

- "Emotions Communication Acceptance - A prevention and therapy programme for pre-school and school-age children". Authors Agnieszka Lasota and Dominika Jońca SM. Difin Publishing House. The book, published in 2021, contains scenarios implementing the theme - the world of emotions and feelings. Sample chapters:
    - "In the land of emotions - what do I feel? what do you feel?"
    - "In the land of emotions - feelings change".
    - "In the land of emotions - windows of emotions"
    - "In the land of emotions - we play with emotions".
    - 'In the land of emotions - a hat of feelings'.
- “Emotional and social skills training for children - Therapy cards and worksheets”, published in 2021. Author Agnieszka Lasota. Difin Publishing House. The publication contains work cards and demonstration cards. Example cards:
    - Emotions. Demonstration card
    - How do I look when I feel sadness/anger/joy? Showcards
    - Sadness/anger/joy - causes
    - Anger/joy/sadness - Emotions - Behaviours
    - What my body feels when I am afraid/angry/pleased
    - What can I do when I am afraid/angry/sad/pleased? Demonstration card

BEST PRACTICE 9

COUNTRY: POLAND

Title/ topic:

BOARD GAMES TO DEVELOP EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Description:

More and more board games with emotions as a theme are appearing on the Polish market. Games are increasingly being used not only by parents, but also by professionals/teachers. The biggest advantage of such games is the possibility to learn through play. Emotions are very often a difficult topic to talk about, especially during adolescence, but also at a younger age when we discuss unpleasant emotions with children. At such times it is useful to talk about emotions during play.

Examples:

- "Mountain of feelings" - a game prepared by psychotherapist Dagmara Teczke. Heim Publishing.
  It is a therapeutic and educational game that supports the work of professionals as well as parents who want to get to know their child better. The aim of the game is to share feelings, emotions and experiences in a safe and comfortable way. The set includes a board, 50 cards divided into two groups, a dice, pawns and instructions. It is a great educational tool and an ideal excuse to have serious conversations about emotions.
- "Playing on emotions" - Author Victoire de Taillac. Published by Nasza Księgarnia.
  The game contains more than 100 icon cards with which players will represent different emotions. Each can be associated with many things, guaranteeing great fun. The player asks a question starting with HOW DO I FEEL WHEN... (e.g. How do I feel when I'm late for my first date?) the other players each lay out one icon card - the one they think best fits the answer to the question. The person asking the question chooses the one they feel best represents their emotion. The person whose card is chosen scores a point. The question is now asked by the next player. The first person to score 3 points wins the game. In addition to the more than 100 icon cards mentioned earlier, the game set includes: blank cards for creating your own icons, cards with ready-made questions HOW I FEEL, WHEN... as well as blank cards prepared for writing down your own questions.

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BEST PRACTICE 10

COUNTRY: ROMANIA

Title/ topic:

COLLECTION OF METHODS AND TECHNIQUES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN YOUNG CHILDREN (PUBLISHED UNDER THE TITLE "HAPPY CHILDREN - SUCCESSFUL ADULTS")

Description:

It is a methodological guide designed especially for educators and teachers working with small children and it aims to guide them and motivate them to apply different methods and techniques in their everyday work for developing the children's emotional intelligence.

The guide is quite consistent (over 200 pages) and it offers well-documented theoretical information regarding the development of emotional intelligence, as well as a variety of already tried and proven effective techniques of working with children of different ages within the school environment to choose from. It also contains recommendations for parents and family members. It is available for download in Romanian free of charge.

Link:

https://www.isj-db.ro/static/files/RED/1.PRESCOLAR/aprilie/prescolar_Patrascu__Tocan_Copii_fericii__aduli_de_succes.pdf

www.freepik.com

BEST PRACTICE 11

COUNTRY: ROMANIA

Title/ topic:

PILOT PROGRAM FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE OF THE PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS FROM "RADU PETRESCU" HIGH-SCHOOL (PRUNDU BÂRGĂULUI, BISTRIȚA-NĂSĂUD) (2016-2018)

Description:

The high-school has implemented an educational program for developing the social and emotional intelligence of the primary school students between 2016 and 2018. The program was focused on two main components: (1) recognizing the emotions and (2) dealing with those emotions and aimed at improving emotional self-control, facilitating the adaptation to the school environment, developing the active listening skills, developing empathy, improving self-consciousness and self-responsibility over others, developing the relationships, improving conflict resolution strategies, reducing physical and verbal aggressiveness, increasing self-esteem and self-understanding.

The methods of intervention used during the workshops were: story-telling, collage, structured games, mental experiments of potential situations, thematic dialogue, role play, self-reflection, presentation, brainstorming, working with metaphors etc.

Examples of activities from the program:

- ***The box with emotions*** - each pupil writes on a piece of paper how he/ she feels at a given moment (anonymously) and all the pieces of paper are gathered in a box. The teacher then extracts the notes with emotions and reads them out loud, using the opportunity to speak about a certain emotion (how to recognize it, the situations in which we feel it etc.), also asking the pupils in the class to offer solutions to regulate the respective emotion. Validating all emotions as natural is very important.
- ***The realm of emotions*** - an activity in which pupils learn about the variety of emotions and their different intensities (images or cads may be used), how to recognize them within their own body and in others. Negative emotions are addressed and pointed out as normal, while some coping mechanisms are also presented.
- ***I am what I do with joy and gratitude*** - pupils are oriented to find their strong points and talents, as well as to set learning goals for themselves. They are also taught to be grateful for what they have and are in the present.
- ***My journey*** - pupils are challenged to experience an optimistic attitude towards their future and make a life plan that will bring them closer to their dream/ goal, by identifying and formulating objectives, identifying necessary actions and resources, assessing from time to time where they are in relation to their dream/ goal and how to adjust their actions.
- ***You and me*** - the pupils practice through role play offering and receiving compliments, conflict resolution strategies and anxiety and anger management. They will be able to train their stress resilience and apply solutions to everyday life situations.
- ***The line of my life*** - the pupils learn about the axis of life and about the identity matrix, which help them know themselves better and improve their decision capacity regarding their future. They are invited to travel ten years into their future and project how they see themselves then. Then they are invited to reflect on what they need to do now in order to achieve their goals.
- ***The little writer and the life mission*** - metaphors are used in order to create a story in which the main techniques and lessons learnt are summarized and which will help empower the pupils to keep applying what they have learnt and practiced.

Link:

https://sutliana.wordpress.com/pagina-elevilor/scolari-2/dezvoltarea-inteligentei-emotionale-si-sociale-la-scolarii-din-invatamantul-primar-liceul-radu-petrescu-prundu-bargaului-program-pilot-2016-2018/

www.freepik.com

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE	Set of specific skills which enable a person to recognize, understand and appropriately express his/ her own emotions, but also to recognize, understand and deal with or influence the emotions of others. If intelligence is a general skill which enables problem solving, emotional intelligence is a general skill focused on solving emotional and social problems, such as understanding the occurrence of emotions in oneself and others, finding functional ways to express emotions in various situations, initiating and maintaining relationships, joining groups, conflict resolution etc.
EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENT (EQ)	A quantification, a number reflecting the level of emotional intelligence measured with the help of standardized tests and reported to a norm in the population for which the test was designed. It is often used in opposition with the intelligence quotient (IQ), which refers to the level of intelligence used for solving problems.
EMPATHY	The ability to understand what and why others are feeling and to connect with those emotions on a personal level. It implies different levels of depth: (1) cognitive empathy represents the capacity to understand the logic of the other's emotions, (2) emotional empathy represents the ability to feel what the other is feeling, (3) compassionate empathy refers to the ability of having a clear overview of the other's situation and what steps are needed to be done in order to deal with that situation.
INTELLIGENCE	A general skill, partially determined by the genetics of an individual and mainly determined by the interaction process with his/ her own environment, which allows the individual to acquire knowledge and apply the knowledge in order to solve problems and better adapt to his/ her own environment.
RELATIONSHIP	Connection between two people implying repeated interactions and emotional exchange. Relationships may be short-term or long-term (depending on the level of the mutual commitment), positive or negative (depending on the polarity of the emotional exchange), functional or dysfunctional (depending on the level of the mutual commitment, on the polarity of the emotional exchange and on the level of cooperation in achieving goals and nurturing growth).
RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT	The ability to use emotions to connect with other people and to use language and non-verbal behaviour in order to regulate or influence the others' emotions. The proficient use of this ability leads to functional and long-term relationships, hence its name.
SELF-AWARENESS	The ability to be conscious of one's own physical status and emotions and to link the body sensations and psychological manifestations to the life situations and

	social stimuli which have triggered or influenced them in some way.
SELF-MANAGEMENT	The ability to express all emotions in a functional way and situation-appropriately, managing both verbal and non-verbal reactions. Also includes the ability to verbalize and describe the difficult, negative emotions one is feeling in a clear, understandable way and solicit support.
SOCIAL AWARENESS	The ability to process the others' body language, voice clues and verbal expressions in order to identify the emotions they feel and link them with the life situations that have triggered them. It also includes the ability to feel similar emotions.

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