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EDUCATION FOR EQUALITY
GOING BEYOND GENDER STEREOTYPES

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Output 3

TEACHERS' TOOL KIT

FOR GENDER EQUALITY
in PRESCHOOL
and PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

This material is created by the project stake holders from Italy, Austria, Spain and Sweden. This Tool Kit now will be tested in these countries and after that altered by the feedback given. The goal is to have three really good exercises that work in all countries for every theme. By the hope is that the E4E Tool Kit for gender equality can be used by all EU countries to promote gender equality.

When testing the tools these questions need to be answered to make a valuation:

General feedback on the tool:

Suggested alteration:

Strength:

Weakness:

How likely is it that I would use this: Very likely / Maybe / No, I wouldn't

We also need to have feedback on the ABC on Gender, and need answers on that:

How did you find the understanding of the ABC on gender: Very easy, Mostly easy, Not easy

Was there something you missed?

Other general comments on the E4E Tool Kit

The E4E Gender Culture Model

The objective of the E4E project is to spread a culture aimed at overcoming gender stereotypes through the development of tools and methods involving the educational system.

Gender represents more than a child's sex; it reflects social expectations and norms that influence the child's opportunities and treatment.

Culture is something that is connected to our norms that are built by our actions and expectations. The best way to promote a gender aware culture is to change our expectations and to act in new ways. That is why we have created an E4E Tool Kit.

The E4E toolkit is to be easily accessed for whom ever wants to work with gender equality with children between the age of three and eight. The tools have been created by the partners, experts and in collaboration with teachers in each partner country.

Throughout the E4E Gender Culture Model we speak of mainly two groups: Boys and Girls. We do this knowing that all countries still socialize children into one of these groups and the work of the Gender Culture Model is to change that into giving children more opportunities. But we are aware of the transgender children and people that do exist; as we are aware of the different ways of raising and being a girl or a boy today – but in the tools we use common and generalized gender-based assumptions and they are in majority in all our countries.

PART ONE – For Teachers

Teachers and parents both influence children. All the actions suggested for teachers can and are recommended to do with parents as well. This way the work with overcoming gender stereotypes will be strengthened and made sustainable. You also get transparency in the work you do in pre-schools and schools and thereby better communication with the parents.

The ABC on Gender is to be seen as a preparation for the teachers or other adults to work in an inclusive and diversity sensitive way with children.

ABC on Gender

ABC on Gender is the knowledge that we want teachers to have when they are working with the E4E tools. For that we have included a few basic understandings to the E4E Tool Kit, and some exercises to do – with the aim to create true learning by doing.

What Gender Equality is

For the work to be successful we have conveyed that there needs to be a consensus regarding what gender equality is. By clearing misconceptions resistance can be minimized. Resistance is a natural part of working with change as many get uncertain setting off into the new grounds.

What gender equality **is** and **is not**:

It is about adding – not taking away
For example: Giving all children access to all colors and all toys, not taking away the dolls or the cars, pink or blue.

It is about freedom – not oppression
For example: Giving all children more action space so that they can be, and act as suits them.

It is about the right to be different – not the pressure to be the same
For example: It is not about erasing the most feminine or masculine to make all people in one format, but rather to give the freedom to be as different or alike as it suits everyone, regardless of sex.

Sex and gender

Sex refers to the **biological aspects**, like the genitals. Gender is **the social construction** of feminine and masculine, like the idea to connect pink with girls. It changes with the historical and social context, for example was pink considered to be a color for boys up until the early nineteenth century.

Gender is built on three principles creating **The Gender System Model.**

1. Polarization: the need to separate girls from boys, what is feminine is the opposite from what is masculine.
2. Value: that what is regarded feminine is valued less than that what is seen as masculine.

3. The hetero norm: The idea that female and male are attracting opposites that are compensating for each other, creating a whole as a couple.

For the gender system to work these three principles need to be reinforced in expectations, expressed values and actions – in other words in the norms of the society.

The hetero norm is the expectation that all people are or will be heterosexual. This idea is often expressed to children both in words, media and books and as expectations. This leads not only to the feeling of being wrong if you don't fulfil this norm yourself or in your family, but also to friendship being homosocial in that girls play with girls, and boys with boys. This is due to the fear of being romanticised. The idea of two polarized genders becoming whole as one underlines the idea of the feminine and the masculine as opposites. It also exclude families; the family form of a single parent is suddenly a family missing one part, as are the same sex families missing important ingredients of either femininity or masculinity. Another important problem due to this is that gender equality is a question of representation; if only we have as many men as women at a work place the problem is seen as solved. Instead of looking at what a person is adding to the mix, the person is only seen as adding masculine features or female ditto. At a kindergarten this can even have the opposite effect reinforcing the idea of difference if for example a male pedagogue is there to play football and build a tree house while the women are caregiving and nurturing.

The problem with tolerance

The Perspective of Tolerance is dominating the work with norms and gender today. The problem with this perspective is that it is built on an unequal division of power and the structure of "We" and "Them". "We" are tolerant of "them" not fulfilling the norms and expectations, and that is also what we teach children to be. In doing so we are not changing the norms, we are not changing the expectation to expect different ways of being human. And it is only "we" that fulfil the norm who have the power to be tolerant towards "them". "They" are dependent of our tolerance and therefore "we" have the power. If we truly believe in the human rights and equality, no one should be dependent of others tolerance of their being and way of life.

Instead of teaching tolerance we need to teach the expectation of difference and the likeness of all in needs and feelings. Being different from each other is not wrong. But even if we are different all people have the same need of being seen as subjects with feelings and the same rights.

This perspective of changing the expectations and thereby creating new wider norms that give all children more opportunities is based on norm criticism. With this perspective we say that all children should have the gender expressions of their own decision, that all families are just as valuable and that all love is equal.

In the work with children this means that we *do not* point out what might challenge a norm, like a family with two dads – just as we do not feel the need to explain or talk about a family with a dad and a mom. By treating them equally we send a signal of inclusiveness. This does not mean that we should not answer questions from children, but it does mean that we as adults and pedagogues need to be prepared to answer questions in a way that is inclusive.

All people in general and specifically children dislike being seen as divergent as we as humans are in need of being included in the group of the normal. To create a new normality – where different ways of being a girl, boy

or just a child are included, as all their family forms and expressions of love are – we need to treat all children as equal. That means that they are truly included in the group and are not pointed out as norm breakers.

Key questions to ask your self: Would this work the opposite way? Would I say this to a girl – as I said it to a boy? Would I point this out if the situation would be reversed? And: does this exercise or how I am doing it work for someone that is breaking the norm?

For example: I tell the class that you can fall in love with someone of the same sex. That this is okay. But: would I say that it is okay to fall in love with someone of the opposite sex and that this is possible? How does this make a child that might be in love with someone of the same sex feel? Is there any other way to make the classroom or the group a safe environment for all forms of love expressions?

Exercises connected to the ABC on Gender

Exercise: Value Screen

Purpose: Help the participants to have an active mind where they need to take a position. It also is a way of showing that gender equality in something that is changing, as is gender.

What to do: Ask the participants to stand up if they agree with the statement.

Statements:

- ✓ My country is a gender equal country
- ✓ It´s more gender equal today compared than when I grew up
- ✓ It´s seen as more okay for a woman to cry than for a man (We are not asking for the opinion of the participant, but the opinion of the norms.)
- ✓ It is more okay to cry for an infant girl than for an infant boy (Here you almost always can conclude that something has happened between being grown up and being an infant, the gender socialisation.)
- ✓ My gender effects how people perceive me (This might show the insight that we are viewed through the lens of gender.)

The leader reads the statements and after the last one says "Thank you" as a signal that the participants can sit down again. The leader does not comment on the "answers" until all statements are done. Then together with the participants you can talk about different ways of understanding the questions, but also talk about how things change over time. Mostly there is a majority of participants standing for statement two but sitting for the first – so most people feel that there has been a change since they grew up, but that we have not reached the goal. In the same way there is a gap between how most people see crying as okay for little babies, but something happens while we grow up – society views baby girls and boys different than adults. And the last statement shows that it is also about every individual and in the meeting with others. The leader can also say that more than just getting the participants to move the exercise is a way to show that we need to take a stand when we are working with change and that it also requires that you look at yourself and reflect on who you are.

There might be an opinion about the first statement. Gender equality is not really a question about how you feel, but rather a fact. So, if there are for example wage gaps or other statistics showing differences between sexes there is no gender equality regardless of how some people feel about it. However, the statement is not really a discussion but a check on where we stand in our understanding of the facts.

Strength: Easy!

Weakness: Might not get the anticipated answers (but that is okay too).

Exercise: Explore Tolerance

Purpose: To create a new normality, by making it visible that we are expecting some ways of being and living, while others are pointed out as a possible way to break the expectations. The exercise is showing how the tolerance perspective works: Tolerance is built on the notion that we tolerate that someone is breaking a norm. However, we are not changing the norm and creating a new normality that includes many different ways of being a child or family. One way to be aware of this is to flip the coin.

What to do: The leader states:

- For me it is okay for a girl to dance!
- For me it is okay for a boy to play football
- For me it is okay if my child falls in love with a child of a different sex!
- For me it is okay for a heterosexual couple to form a family and have a child!
- For me it is okay for a girl to wear a dress!
- For me it is okay for a boy to use the colour blue!

The leader says that the norms and expectations become invisible while the breaking of an expectation often is pointed out. By pointing out that you can break the norm you actually make the expectations of the norm more firm and set; "this is the norm – you can break it". For children, and all people, the role of breaking a norm is a stressful position to have and many avoid taking that step, and thereby they and the world miss out on a lot of opportunities. Children's action spaces are narrowed down to the expected.

Questions for the participants: How did these statements make you feel? Did they seem plausible as something someone might say? How about the opposite? Should anyone need someone's approval for what they are wearing, who they love, how their family is formed? How does it affect someone's self-esteem to need approval for how they are, act or live?

If you have a reaction from the group that the opposite of the statements, you just say: "Okay – that is also a way you can feel. How are your thoughts on how we should make all children feel safe and loved in the group, regardless of how they act in reference to gender expectations? If a child has two moms? Or falls in love with a friend of the same sex?"

Strength: Fun! Changes Perspective fast and easy.

Weakness: Leader needs to be prepared. Statements start emotions.

Exercise: Shake the Norm

Purpose: To use your body to show what is needed to start to act differently, and how natural the habit feels. Norms are built on the expected and on doing and reacting as we "always" have been. To act differently requires and active thought and some effort.

What to do: Ask the participants to shake their shoulders and bend down with their arms hanging. Count to three and ask them to but their arms over the chest as a cross, one hand at each shoulder. Do so three times, and then as you count to three ask them to put their arms in opposite position. This leads to people having to think and often to some laughter.

Explain that this is how norms work. They follow the expected and what we did last time. To change the expected and give more opportunities than existing norms we need to put some effort in to not doing just as we always do.

Questions for the participants: How did it feel to do it the last time?

Strength: Makes you laugh – and that make you open.

Weakness: Requires that the whole group is movable enough.

The Power of Me

The teachers and pedagogues working with children are the key components of the gender equality work. In their values, expectations and actions, the change is possible or will be stagnated. Therefor we need to work with an awareness of ones' thoughts and values and the impact it has in the meeting with children.

The power of me gives an opportunity to reflect and make change in our own behaviours.

Exercise: Reflect

Purpose: To get the opportunity to reflect and make change in our own behaviours.

What to do: Reflect on

- How are my parents gender roles? How have their gender influenced their life choices?
- How was my upbringing – would it have been different if I had another sex? How has my gender influenced my life choices, regarding work and family?
- Do I live up to the expectations regarding my gender? Regarding my life choices? Regarding my family? Regarding my sexual orientation?
- How might my experiences affect how I view gender and children?

Questions for the participants: Talk to your colleagues about thoughts that the reflection has given you. How did the questions make you feel? Did they shed any new light on your views and behaviors?

Strength: Easy and safe.

Exercise: My Gender Story

Purpose: To get the opportunity of reflecting on how your gender has been a part of your life, to see how you are fulfilling or challenging norms and also how your gender story might differ or be the same as others.

What to do: Each participant takes a sheet of paper and draws a cross on it to get three sections. Take wax crayons, coloured pencils or felt pens. Into the first section draw how you observed/experienced men/women in your childhood and/or being a child in reflection to the gender expectations; in the second section the same bit during your youth; in the third section how you observe/experience it now; in your personal and/or professional life. Let the participants draw for 20-30 minutes.

After drawing: Groups of 2 to 6 people present their pictures to each other. They explain what they have drawn, how they think, feel about it. This might take some time, and it is important that all feel that they get to tell their story. A good plan is to have a break afterwards, so that as the groups that are done they can have a break.

Finally, in the plenum you talk about the exercise together.

Pitfall: If you form sub-groups of only two persons they might tend to go "deeper" in to the discussions, that might not be what the leader is aiming for.

Questions for the participants: How was it to draw? How was it to talk about it?

Talk about: Are there similarities, differences, remarkable recognitions? What did you learn about different ways to perceive gender, to act and broaden gender borders?

What is needed: Paper, flip chart size. Wax crayons, colored pencils or felt pens

Strength: To be creative and draw activates more parts of your brain and lets you talk about things in a creative way.

Weakness: Some people feel stressed by the expectations of drawing.

Country Context: In some countries the act of being creative is ruined by demands and judgements.

Exercise: Who is Who

Purpose: To understand and make it visible that you have a lot of expectations on people you meet guided by the norms and internalized stereotypes.

What to do: Show the pictures. Ask the participants to fantasies about who that person is, what the person is thinking, doing now and other times, how the person lives or what family she*he has and what she*he works, and so on.

Then tell the true story of the image: the photograph is of a facilitator, in one of his trips, specifically to Vancouver. Although it is a rainy day, this person always goes to a beach and bathes in it, so she is barefoot, because she has put his feet in the water.



What you need: A printer or the possibility to show the pictures digitally.

Questions for the participants: Why do you think you imagined the things you did – by looking at the picture? What can assumptions like this led to?

Strength: Creative for the mind. Useful. Easy. Clear. Pictures are powerful.

Weakness: We need to create and add pictures to use. If the beneficiaries use their own pictures they might choose some that are contra-productive.

PART TWO – With Children

Themes for the E4E Tool Kit

The E4E Tool Kit is divided into four themes all connected to the Gender Culture Model; that includes: polarisation & division + value & hierarchy + the hetero norm. These themes aim to add opportunities and expand the action space of all children. The themes are:

Let's play Role-plays to help children to act outside gender roles and expectations, to broaden their action space.

Training 4 life to learn the importance of care-giving skills, and emotions for a healthy personal growth.

My family aims at creating an inclusive atmosphere regarding family forms. To broaden the norms and expectations connected to the concept of family.

Room 4 Equality helps the teacher to analyses materials for children.

My family and Room 4 Equality could be also activities which involve parents.

What to be aware of: As a leader you have an idea of why you do the exercise. But remember that you need to let the children experience the exercise openly. Many of the exercises are to be experienced rather than analyzed, and are to be repeated for effect. It is recommended for leaders to participate in the exercises but in doing so you have to try to let the children lead the direction not to overtake the exercise. When doing these exercises, it is of course necessary to be aware of different children's abilities and to make them work for all participants.

Let's Play helps children to act outside gender roles and expectations, to broaden their action space.

Training 4 Life: Boxes of Feelings + Circle of Feelings + Express your feelings + Caregiving Roleplay

Training 4 Life helps children to learn the importance and value of caregiving skills. It also focuses on emotions for a healthy personal growth. These abilities are both necessities in our societies and on an individual level.

My Family: Family Star + Animal Family + Family Interview + Family Collage

My Family aims at creating an inclusive atmosphere regarding family forms. To broaden the norms and expectations connected to the concept family and to work with the hetero norm.

Room 4 Equality: Child Friendly Room + Reading with Parents and Family Members + Book Bags for Parents + Checklist for Books
Room 4 Equality is a way to analyses materials for children so that they give them more opportunities.

Let's play

Let's Play helps children to act outside gender roles and expectations, to broaden their action space.

Name: The Physical Contact

Purpose: In the harsh division of girls and boys they have less and less body contact and the contact is filled with tension. To help to create an open and friendly environment you can use exercises with neutral and friendly body contact between all children.

What to do:

Play different exercises with body contact and make sure to have a good mix. Also be aware of and respect that some children have a problem with body contact, no one should be forced to body contact.

- *Follow me*: One child leads another child around by letting it have its hands on the others shoulder and with closed eyes walking after.
- *The mess*: All children stand in a small circle shoulder to shoulder with closed eyes. Then they reach out into the middle until all have found another hand and taken it (they should hold someone else's hands with both their own). Then they open up their eyes and regard the situation. Finally they try to untangle the mess (it always works with some patience).
- *The body twister*: Children form groups of two. Each child takes a card on which is written a different part of the body; for example on the card of one child is written arm, on the other one leg; children have to join the parts of their body indicated by the cards and then take two more cards and do the same while still having the body-parts of the first cards attached – as far as it is possible to maintain the balance of the body.
- *Circle of hugs:* The children all stand in a circle and ask a volunteer child to stand in the centre and cover its eyes with a handkerchief. In silence, each child in the circle gives a hug to the person in the centre. Let them give the hug freely, and then analyse how it was to stand in the circle, and how it was to give hugs. Ask if there was any differences in how each person gave that hug.

What is needed: For The body twister: Cards with parts of the body. For the Circle of hugs: Handkerchief.

Questions for the children:

For the circle of hugs: How did it feel to receive hugs? How did it feel to give hugs? Did the hugs feel different from different people? I which way were they different?

Strength: Funny for children; easy; cooperative exercises; fits to all ages.

Weaknesses: Elder children might have more limits regarding physical contact; the approach of girls and boys might become different with increasing age.

Pitfalls for the teachers – key competences: It could be problematic if there is bullying in the group. The teacher must be aware of this. Circle of hugs is used for bullying prevention.

Name: The Superhero

Purpose: The Superhero-role is an interesting trop to play with. It is highly regarded by most children and can be used as a trojan to change the idea of masculine and feminine and the value of different skills and tasks. The goal with the role play is to make the hero role complex and something for all. It also includes aspects that bring roles together, to show that one person can be both a superhero and a parent: how would a super parent hero be?

What to do: Let the children create a superhero that is their superhero-alter ego, by drawing or by colouring a picture. Then they are asked to imagine things that their superhero does. What are the super powers? How do you use them? What was the last superhero task you did? After exploring the superhero's skills and missions and accomplishments – tell the children that their superhero is a parent. Ask how they can use their super powers to take care of their kid; to take care of the house hold. What is the superhero's favourite dish to make?

What is needed: Papers, pencils, colours.

Questions for the children: What are the super powers? How do you use them? What was the last superhero task you did? How can you use your super powers to take care of your kid? To take care of your house hold? What is your superhero's favourite dish to make?

Strength: Express themselves in a new way; strong and powerful for all; changing stereotypes by creating superheroes whose gender does not matter.

Weaknesses: Maybe difficult to make children think that superheroes are normal people.

Pitfalls for the teachers – key competences: Teachers have to dynamize the exercise because children probably will not select the abilities of caring, parenting etcetera. Make clear that those abilities are necessary to survive.

Name: Body Boundaries

Purpose: All people have the right to their own body. The expectation in society is that girls´ bodies are more accessible and at the same time girls train more in respecting body boundaries than boys do. All children need to train both on expressing body boundaries and understanding and respecting these signals.

What to do: Let the children stand in two lines – one child in front of another. Line A will slowly proceed towards line B until the person in line B gets person A to stop by using signals for "no". The first-time line B can shout "Stop!" Next time just say the word "No", then whisper, after that use boy language and the last time just their eyes. Doing this the children exercise the skill to say no and the skill to listen. Let all children try both positions. After trying signals for no, you try signals for yes and line B steps forward when given a yes signal. It is as important to understand the signal yes as the signal no. The lack of a no in intimate relations can be mistaken for yes, so the respect and the expectation on a yes signal is important to teach in regard of body boundaries. Talk about how it felt to get yes-signals. Or no-signals.

Variant: The children use traffic light colours to indicate what is okay for them, what is more or less and what is not okay.

What is needed: For the variant - traffic light: Green – orange – red.

Questions for the children: Was it easy or hard to feel when someone was getting to close? Was it easy or hard to see of the person was saying yes or no? How does it feel if someone does not listen when we say no? Do you want people to listen when you say no? Do you think it is important that you listen when others say no?

Strength: Easy exercise. Important because children need to learn how to show their boundaries and how to respect others.

Weaknesses: Sometimes children are not able to recognize complex feelings.

Pitfalls for the teachers – key competences: They have to know their own boundaries and how to set them. And they have to be able to recognize the boundaries of others.

Training 4 Life

Training 4 life helps children to learn the importance and value of caregiving skills. It also focuses on emotions for a healthy personal growth. These abilities are both necessities in our societies and on an individual level.

Name: Boxes of Feelings

Purpose: By reflecting on our feelings we train our ability to recognize different feelings as well as expressing them. The reflexion also opens up room for and shows the importance of feelings. Girls tend to get more opportunities to work with feelings in their games and through social contact, but all children need to train, and that is the goal of this exercise. The exercise let's all children connect to feelings and communicate them.

What to do: Prepare by talking about which emotions you know, do an inventory. Talk about in which situations you feel different emotions and how they can help you. Talk about that all feelings are okay and talk about how we can need different things when we feel something. Some might need some space when they are sad, some needs a hug.

The children get beans to put in the boxes of feelings to reflect what feelings they have during the day. This activity can be realized freely every day or once a week or when something relevant happens in the group.

What is needed: Boxes with different feelings written on it or for the younger children with pictures on it that express the certain feeling; beans.

Questions for the children: How do you feel today? How do you feel now? Take a bean and put it in the box which indicates your feeling.

Strength: All children gets to express their feelings and all children get familiar with all feelings and the right to express them.

Weaknesses: Adults needs to be prepared to work with expressed negative emotions.

Pitfalls for the teachers – key competences: Teachers must know themselves and their emotions very well, otherwise they are not able to work with the children on emotions – they will suppress certain emotions.

Name: Circle of Feelings

Purpose: By reflecting on our feelings we train our ability to recognize different feelings as well as expressing them. The reflexion also opens up room for and shows the importance of feelings. Girls tend to get more opportunities to work with feelings in their games and through social contact, but all children need to train, and that is the goal of this exercise. The exercise let's all children connect to feelings and communicate them.

What to do: Prepare by talking about which emotions you know, do an inventory. Talk about in which situations you feel different emotions and how they can help you. Talk about that all feelings are okay and talk about how we can need different things when we feel something. Some might need some space when they are sad, some needs a hug.

The children sit in a circle and one by one take out the card with the emotion that most corresponds to the emotion they feel today or at this moment. In doing so they communicate to their friends how they feel and if they want to they can also add why they picked this card. They can also add how they like to be treated when they have this feeling.

What is needed: Box with pictures of emotions, illustrations or photos of people expressing different emotions.

Questions for the children: How do you feel today? How do you feel now? Why did you choose this picture?

Strength: All children gets to express their feelings and all children get familiar with all feelings and the right to express them.

Weaknesses: Adults needs to be prepared to work with expressed negative emotions.

Pitfalls for the teachers – key competences: Teachers must know themselves and their emotions very well, otherwise they are not able to work with the children on emotions – they will suppress certain emotions.

Name: Express your Feelings

Purpose: Feelings are important tools for us. They are signals for our will and give us power to act. All feelings are important, and all feelings are good (even if not all expressions of feelings are good – like violence as an expression of anger). There are many ways of expressing feelings. The aim of the exercise is to explore different ways and by that to understand that we can communicate feelings in many ways. While doing so we also get to train to express feelings and understand the value of them.

What to do: Explore different ways of expressing emotions with the children after doing an inventory of many different feelings. Start by doing an inventory of feelings that all humans can have, with older children wright all the feelings you can come up with. This makes it into more than just basic emotions as being angry, sad and happy.

Mime: You can act a feeling silently using your body language and let the others guess.

Draw: Try to put colour and shape to a feeling and create art. Look at non-figurative art and talk about what feelings the children see.

Dance: Try do dance different feelings. Dance both on your own and as a group holding hands and creating the feeling of being one organism.

Sculpture: Divide the children into groups of three and let them create a sculpture or a frozen scene to show an emotion. Let the others guess what the feeling is.

What is needed: Paper, pencil, colours for the drawing. Music for dancing.

Questions for the children: Which did he*she express?

Mime, draw: Do you like this exercise? How was it to mime, to draw? What did you express? How does it feel to have this emotion? What can cause someone to feel this emotion?

Dance: Where in the body do you feel this emotion? How does it feel to have this emotion? What can cause someone to feel this emotion?

Sculpture: Where in the body do you feel this emotion? How does it feel to have this emotion? What can cause someone to feel this emotion?

Strength: Creative exercise, uses different ways of expression.

Weaknesses: Some kids might be to shy to express their emotions. If they have an actual problem (e.g. bullying) they might not want to express their feelings.

Pitfalls for the teachers – key competences: Teachers must know themselves and their emotions very well, otherwise they are not able to work with the children on emotions – they will suppress certain emotions. Teachers need to know how to dynamize this exercise if some children do not feel comfortable or if they do not know how to do it.

How to facilitate: The teacher can give the children an example; or show pictures, videos to analyse in the group. Use cartoons they normally see but without voice – to recognize the feelings of the characters.

Name: Caregiving Roleplay

Purpose: Caregiving is a positive skill and the tool aims at making it an honourable task. By letting all children do the task you express the expectation that all of them have these skills.

What to do: Specific kids are chosen and rotate to be care giving to their friends during the day. Beforehand the teacher talks about ways of being care giving and empathic. Next time she*he can use the care giving role as a secret mission. All children get one person to have as a secret special friend. At the end of the day or week the children should guess who their secret friend was.

What is needed: nothing

Questions for the children: Evaluation: Did you notice who took care of you? What did she*he do for you? How was it? How did you feel? How was it to take care of somebody else? Could you take care of her*him?

Strength: Learn to be empathic with their parents; promotes to take care of other people.

Weaknesses: Keeping secrets is difficult for small kids.

Pitfalls for the teachers – key competences: During the evaluation the teacher has to care for that no negative evaluations are made. The teacher has to know how to formulate a potential out of a critique.

Age comments: Keeping secrets is difficult for small kids – might be better not to do it secretly for them: a child can be picked publicly to take care of another child and after the day the group evaluates how she*he did it – only in a positive way.

My Family

My family aims at creating an inclusive atmosphere regarding family forms. To broaden the norms and expectations connected to the concept family and to work with the hetero norm.

Name: Family star

Purpose: All children have the right to feel happy about their family. The Family is an important part of creating your identity and it is therefore important to feel included with your family form. The exercise shows that you have no expectations of how a family should be and that it is up to the child to construct what their family looks like.

What to do: Let all the children create a golden star in which they can draw or put pictures of family members. Then discuss with them about the different kind of families. You can also create a "wall of stars", where all families-stars are put together. By doing a star as a teacher you can broaden the concept with a pet, a teddy bear, a neighbour, a friend, an uncle in Oklahoma etcetera.

What is needed: Paper to create star's shapes; colours; photos with family members; glue; scissors; scotch tape

Questions for children: Introduce your family star; presenting who the members are.

Strength: It is a very easy exercise to do and let's all the children present their families equally.

Weakness: There might be resistance to present the families if there are particular situations, like if the parents are dead or likewise.

Pitfalls for the teachers – key competences: Be sensitive to specific situations; make sure that you have information beforehand.

How to facilitate: Express in how you talk about the exercise that everything is ok (no judgement); take time if there is a sensitive situation; do not force if there is a resistance to say something.

Name: Animal Family

Purpose: By high-lightening that there are many kinds of families also among animals we change the idea of what is "natural" and expected. The aim of this exercise is to discuss about different family forms through the animals' example. By talking about the different family models in an equal way we show that they are all equally valid. By this we promote respect and acceptance of diversity as something positive. For this reason, it is important to show them the different types of families that exist, analyse the positive aspects of each one, and see that the important thing in all families is that they take care of each other and treat each other affectionately, regardless of who they are. Showing these different alternatives to children is important so that they are aware that there are so many different models and possibilities.

What to do: Start by talking about family forms from the nature. Tell the children about the swans. They often live al their life with one partner, even if one of them dies. And it is often two males that raise the children together. Talk about the lions where the female lions live in groups with their children while males live in another collective. Talk about penguins where the male penguin takes care of the eggs while the female goes out hunting. By talking about different family forms, you show that the nuclear family norm is neither a must nor given by nature. Then talk about what a family is – that it is a feeling of belonging and taking care of each other in different ways. We end by explaining that there are no better family forms, that the important thing is love and care.

What is needed: Knowledge about different animals and illustrations of them to use when you talk about them.

Questions for children: How many forms of families are there? Do you think that they are happy? Which animal family is more like yours?

Strength: Funny exercise; you can introduce the topic of family forms in a soft way through animals' examples.

Weakness: Teachers without competences about animal world need to prepare.

Name: Family Interview

Purpose: Sometimes the present can seem like the only way to do things and to live. But these things change all the time, and the insight of that will help us to understand that things can be different in the future. The goal is through interviews with family members to display how the family norms both are kept alive and are changing over generations. But also, to show the need in a family of both taking care of children and to work.

What to do: Let the children do an interview with their parents about family and work. Let them ask their parents:

- Who took care of me before I started preschool / school?
- Did you go to any preschool when you were a child? If not, who took care of you? If yes, who took care of you before that?
- Did your parents go to preschool? If not, who took care of them? If yes, who took care of them before that?
- Did your mother go to work outside the home? Did your father go to work outside the home?
- If you could choose any work in the world, what would that be?
- What do you think is the most important thing with being a parent?

What is needed: A list of questions, adapted to the age

Questions for children: Let the children reflect on these questions: Do I want kids? Do I want to share the care of my child with someone? Do I want to work when I am grown up? If I could choose any job in the world, what would that be and why would I choose it?

Strength: A fun and easy way of starting to recognize the connection to history and our family structures.

Weakness: Fits elder children best.

Pitfalls for the teachers – key competences: You need to inform the family members before the exercise.

Age comments: Preferably for 6 – 8 years old, but it can be used also with younger children if adapted

How to facilitate: Take care of all narrations; sharing the goal of the activity with children and families.

Name: Family Collage

Purpose: Diversity is a present reality in the daily life of children. Using illustration or pictures from newspaper, magazines, etc. you can introduce the theme of different kinds of families in a fun an open way.

What to do: Ask children to create different families together by using illustrations or photos from magazines and such. The task is to create a collage that represent different types of family forms: single-parents, gay parents, with children, without children, families with grandparents, with animals, with a mother and a father, with two moms and two dads, with a new parent, adopted and foster parents, with a new refugee brother … all you can think of. A big picture will be created with all the families. If it is a big group of children, you divide them in to smaller groups of a maximum of six children.

The activity could continue with older children by asking the children to imagine stories of these families or by creating texts in which the story is told directly by one of the family members.

What is needed: Newspapers and magazines; glue; scissors; scotch tape. The teacher should be aware so that the illustrations and photos have a good mic of diversity as to body shape, skin colour, age and if possible disabilities.

Questions for children: How many families did we create? Do you know families like those?) Can you find your family form? What is a family for you?

Strength: A fun way to visualize different families.

Weakness: Finding magazines that have a good representation of diversity

Room for Equality

Room 4 Equality is a way to analyses materials for children so that they give them more opportunities.

Name: Child-friendly room

Purpose: The physical space that children occupy is most often filled with expectations; about who is supposed to feel at home, what to play and what skills to practice. By changing the space to be gender sensitive we give children more opportunities and wider action space.

What to do: Start by analyzing the space. Give the children two post-it notes (smiley emoticons and sad emoticons) and ask them to stick them in the place that makes them feel good (smiling one) and in the place they do not like (sad one). Think together how to redevelop spaces to make them all smiling.

What is needed: Post it's.

Questions for children: Where do you feel good? What do you feel is good? Who is playing where? What are they practicing in their activities? Are there spaces that are more occupied by some? Are there spaces that invite all children to play together? What can we do to make the space safe and open to all?

Strength: The children participate in creating safe and inclusive rooms.

Weakness: Some may not feel safe to say your opinion; the children could influence each other

How to facilitate: Guided discussion; everything you say is ok (no judgment); divide the class in small groups.

Name: Reading with Parents and Family Members

Purpose: Reading to children from an early age is an engaging activity: not only is it very important regarding the development of the language and the vocabulary but it also helps to strengthen the parent – child relationship, creates a habit of listening. Choosing stories that are gender sensitive give children more opportunities both that they might find a reflection of things they see in themselves and that it opens up the mind to more ways of being and living. And at the same time this helps to create an awareness of diversity and gender issues in the whole family.

Books are a valuable tool because they are bearers of values and expectations. They are a part of creating the norms. By reading books that are sensitive to gender and family forms the reading activity is a part of giving all children more opportunities and creating inclusiveness.

What to do: Families come to organized meetings at the preschool or at the school during which they read to children stories chosen because they are gender sensitive.

What is needed: Gender sensitive books.

Strength: The reading creates a bridge between the home and preschool / school.

Weakness: There is a need for parents' participation and attention.

Country context: S/AU – hard to get parents involved in activities in the school.

Name: Book Bags for Parents

Purpose: Reading to children from an early age is an engaging activity: not only is it very important regarding the development of the language and the vocabulary but it also helps to strengthen the parent – child relationship, creates a habit of listening. Choosing stories that are gender sensitive give children more opportunities both that they might find a reflection of things they see in themselves and that it opens up the mind to more ways of being and living. And at the same time this helps to create an awareness of diversity and gender issues in the whole family.

Books are a valuable tool because they are bearers of values and expectations. They are a part of creating the norms. By reading books that are sensitive to gender and family forms the reading activity is a part of giving all children more opportunities and creating inclusiveness.

What to do: By using the checklist and analyzing the books the teachers create book bags for parents to lend home. By doing so we create an expectation of parents reading at home, but also let children meet inclusiveness in more environments. Alongside the book or books in the book bag you leave a folder explaining the project. Use the suggested text or create your own! It is also a great idea to start the project with a parent meeting where it is explained.

What is needed: Gender sensitive books.

Strength: Create a bridge to parents and the children's homes, so that both the preschool/school and the home are working in the same direction.

Weakness: No control regarding what the parents might do and say when they read the books.

Country context: IT parents' resistance.

Pitfalls for the teachers – key competences: To share the projects goals and the values connected to it.

> **Read and grow!**
>
> Dear reader,
> this book bag is created in a project that is aiming to strengthen your child!
>
> By reading books you will develop a rich language and have a greater vocabulary. But you also learn the important skills of empathy and abstract thinking. We all live in a world of change and diversity. To be strong in this world we need to be able to handle different people, and we need to feel safe and confident in the feeling that *I am okay just as I am!* Books chosen with awareness give more children the wonderful experience to find that there are more people like me, and at the same time books show us that there are many different ways of being and living. We are created different – but equal!
>
> We hope that you enjoy the books in the bag. They are chosen with regard to the Human rights act and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Name: Checklist for Books

Purpose: Books are a valuable tool not just because reading is a valuable skill, but also because they are bearers of values and expectations. They are a part of creating the norms. Not mainly in the story as much as in the details. Who is the protagonist, do we have as many girls as boys as main characters? How are people portrayed with regard to the gender stereotypes in aspect to their actions, feelings and how they look? What family forms are included? Can all families of the society and their children find identification in an equal way? Can children mirror themselves in our books and can our books give them new role models that give them more opportunities than the gender bound expectations?

What to do: This is a tool for adults to examine and analyse how inclusive and gender aware the books at the preschool or school are. (It is also possible to give the list to the parents to let them check their own bookshelves.) By counting we take a first step of creating a representative book shelf that includes the modern society's diversity. The areas selected are connected to the Gender System Model from the ABC on gender. Look at the books that you read and count the aspects below in Annex A.

What is needed: Selection of books; the exercise can be realized in preschool/school and at home. You use the books that are available to the children.

Questions for the participants: What do you think of the result? Why do you think it is the way it is? How can you (If needed) create a greater diversity in the books you offer children?

Step two: Create groups of approximately four people and choose a book to discuss; How is the girls and boys/women and men portrayed in this book? Are they fulfilling the ideas connected to gender, or are they challenging the stereotypes? Look at their actions and activities, the words that the use or that describe them, look at their clothes and environment, where are they and what emotions do they show? Are there any children or adults that are portrayed in a queer way; with an unclear gender identity? If someone is challenging any norms and expectations connected to gender or family, is this done in a natural and equal way, or is it high-lightened in any way? (To create inclusive norms we need to be treated equal in our differences; a book would not be about that you CAN have a mom and a dad, so a book with for example two moms should be just like a book with a mom and dad to create equality and inclusiveness.)

Strength: Easy exercise.

Annex A

AREA: Sex
Count the number of books that have

___ Protagonists who are a she

___ Protagonists who are a he

___ Protagonists who are nor a she, neither a he

AREA: Family
Count the number of books that have

___ Fathers who are present and care giving

___ Mothers who are present and care giving

___ Children who have two moms or two dads

___ Children who have one parent
___ Children who have a mother and a father

___ Children living in one place all the time

___ Children who live in several locations, for example each other week

AREA: Love
Count the number of books that have
___ Love between two girls/women

___ Love between two guys/men

___ Love between a girl/woman and boy/man

___ Love of more than one person

___ Love where the person is not mentioned as a he or she

AREA: Friendship
Count the number of books that have

___ Friendship between boys playing in a group

___ Friendship between boys playing only two with each other

___ Friendship between girls playing in a group

___ Friendship between girls playing only two with each other

___ Friendship between girls and boys

AREA: Gender expression

Count the number of books that have

___ Boys who are empathetic and caring

___ Girls who are empathetic and caring

___ Girls who take initiative, solve problems or are brave

___ Boys who take initiative, solve problems or are brave

___ Boys are described as kind, sweet, good

___ Girls described as kind, sweet, good

___ Boys that are dressed in colors of the rainbow

___ Girls that are dressed in colors of the rainbow

___ Boys crying and feeling sad

___ Girls crying and feeling sad

___ Girls who are angry or show anger

___ Boys who are angry or show anger

___ Girls who are indoors or close to home

___ Boys who are indoors or close to home

___ Girls who are out on adventures in the world

___ Boys who are out on adventures in the world