

We all know that a fairly comprehensive body of educational theory exists that challenges the idea that children require instruction in order to become educated. It is also widely recognized that a particular style of instruction can be inappropriate for a particular child at a particular stage in his / her development. Maria Montessori recognized that educational material, if framed appropriately, can be 'self-correcting' and that children can learn at their own pace through exploration and the weighing-up of options.

The following activities were designed to take place in a 'peer-to-peer' context. *Peer education is an effective strategy for behavioural change.* Superimposed on the basic idea expressed above are other theories about learning that aren't that difficult to understand -

Social learning - "No man is an island". We know this expression. Significant others provide behavioural models for us to emulate.

Theory of Reasoned Action - Humans are hard-wired for compliance to what they perceive as social norms. We act on the basis of our beliefs about what significant people might do or think about our behaviour.

Participatory Education - The horizontal process of communication among peers (or equals) leads to *empowerment* in the form of consensus or collective strategy.

PEER-TO-PEER EDUCATION PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT



Modules for the hour of the class

Establishing team

A team should comprise of 3-4 children. They should plan and prepare one interactive session from the following selection. Each team member has his / her own task(s) - to present something, to prepare questions, to write on the flip chart, to lead the icebreaking games, to distribute and collect the post-its, to participate in the role-play. The teams 'rehearse' their sessions in front of all the class.

NB! The time keeping is important - it has to be with the duration of a regular class.



Session 1 - Trust and Active Listening

Aim: to improve the children's understanding of trust and to show that our active listening skills help us to confide in, understand and be close to others.

Duration: a class /45 minutes/

Group: a school class. The sessions are appropriate for those aged 10 to 15

Location: in the class room or outdoors

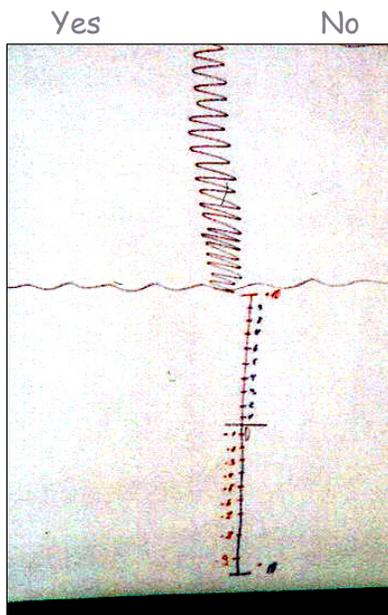
Materials: large blank sheets of paper /flip chart, wrapping paper,



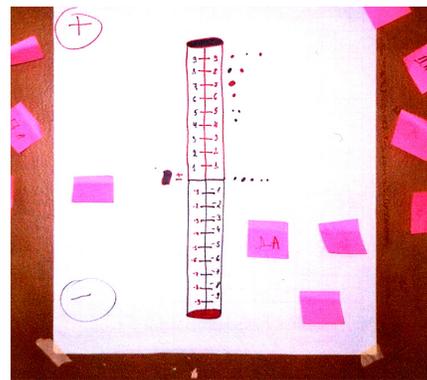
old calendar sheets, rolls of wallpaper or anything that can be written on/; post-its; pens; markers

Preliminary preparation of the posters:

Write down 'Rules', 'Trust' and 'Active listening' on separate posters. Have a fourth one ready for recording feedback. You need to divide this poster horizontally into two sections. Write 'Did you like the session?' in the upper part and leave space for 'Yes' and 'No' columns under it. In the lower part, draw a thermometer with -10 to 0 blue figures and 0 to +10 red figures. By this special thermometer you will check the mood temperature at the end of the session.

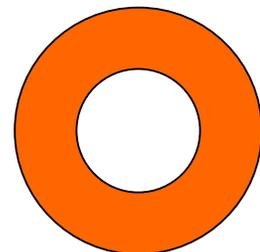


The thermometer



Preparation of the classroom:

The most important thing - the participants should form a circle and it is best to be seated. This may demand the rearrangement of furniture. Push the desks to wall and arrange the chairs in a circle in the middle of the room. Sit on the desks. Sit on cushions on the floor. By hook or by crook - form a circle.



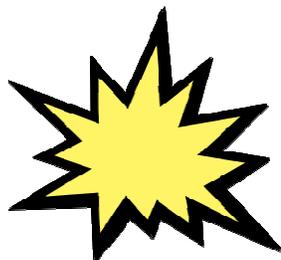
If it is warm outside, the session can be held in the open air.



Implementation of the session

1. The team members present themselves, explain the goals of the session and how it is going to be held.
2. Ice-breaker - 'Changing places' / Appendix 1/
3. Accepting the rules for implementation of all sessions - the 'Rules' poster is hung on the wall. The appointed team member asks the class about rules that everybody will keep during the sessions - another team member records the suggestions. If the class has some difficulties, the team gives hints. Symbols can be used in place of text. (This adds to the fun) e.g. ☞ 'We should listen to each other'

Boooooom!!!!!!!



4. Introducing the Boom - rule to calm down the class if there is chaos and too much noise. The rule says: if a team

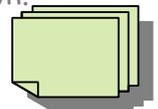
member shouts out "Boom", everybody has to freeze then remain silent until the command is cancelled. The Boom - rule can be used only by team members - if another child uses it, s/he will be punished' - s/he has to sing, dance or do something.



5. A trust game - '**Leading the blind man**' /see the Appendix/. Here are some of the questions that can be asked after the end of the game in order to share the feelings provoked during the process :

- ? How did you feel being the blind man?
- ? How did you feel being the leader?
- ? Which was the role that you liked more? Why?
- ? Was it easy for you to trust your partner?
- ? What does somebody have to do if s/he wants to gain your trust? What characteristics and behaviour should s/he demonstrate?
- ? How do you win the trust of the others?

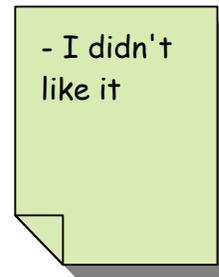
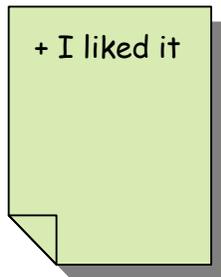
6. *Drawing out the essentials about trust.* If the group seems willing, ask the question '**How trust is created and how do you preserve it?**' could be asked. All the answers given should be noted down on the '**Trust**' poster in the form of key words / phrases. If your group is silent and unresponsive, give them little sheets of paper and ask them to write their opinion down. Afterwards the notes are collected, summarized and put on the poster.



7. *Active listening role-play.* The team presents two possible scenarios of one and the same situation - a pupil who has just received a poor mark meets his/ her class teacher one who did the marking). A) The child needs support and understanding but the teacher



is neglectful, not interested and impatient. B) The teacher listens carefully to what the child is saying, looks at him / her with understanding, encourages him /her with short exclamations and asks open questions: **What happened? How did you feel? How did the teacher react? How did you? How will your parents react?, etc.** The team creates the script for the two scenarios when preparing for the session. Just before the beginning of the role-play each child in the class receives a piece of paper and has to note down what s/he dis/liked in each scenario.



8. *Drawing out the most important thing about the active listening.* Discussion questions:

- ? According to you is there any difference between the scenarios? What makes you think so? Which is the scenario that you like more?
- ? Have you been in such a situation?
- ? How did you feel?
- ? How do you understand that somebody is listening to you carefully? /body language, facial expressions, tone of voice, gestures, questions/

During the discussion a team member summarizes the elements of the active listening.

9. *Drawing general conclusions: 'Why are trust and active listening important?'* The children should be guided towards the understanding that trust and active listening are important for prevention of conflicts. This conclusion can be used as a transition towards the second session - '**Anger, conflicts and ways to deal with them**'.



NB! For fourth-graders the session should start with the game '**Changing places**'. Afterwards the group should be moved directly to the active listening role play. It may be more appropriate to present a situation in which a child, bullied by his/her classmates, goes home crying. Scenario **A** - the mother doesn't listen to the child and **B** - she spends all the time necessary to understand what the problem is and to calm the child down. The questions for discussion needn't be changed. Next comes the conclusion about active listening, why it is important and how it makes us feel. The trust issue could be drawn out of a discussion about friendship - questions:

- ? Do you have a best friend?
- ? What is that you like in him / her?
- ? Can you share everything with him / her?
- ? When you have a problem who is the adult that you talk to? Why him / her?
- ? Does anybody share his / her problems with you? Does anybody look for you friendship?
- ? What is the basis of trust between people and how it is kept?

10. A closing game - '**Pizza**' /see the Appendix/.

11. Feedback - Taking turns, children note down on the feedback poster whether they liked the session and what the temperature is. The team asks them whether they would like to participate in further sessions of this kind.

12. All the children stand up and take each other by the hands. Following a signal given by the facilitator the group shouts out '**Ho-o-o-o-oray - it's ove-e-e-e-e-er!**' or any other chosen expression.



Session 2: Anger, conflicts and ways to deal with them

Aim: to make children aware of how anger arises, its effects and consequences as well as to present ways of anger management.

To explore various types of conflicts, their triggers and ways to manage them.

Duration: a class /45 minutes/

Group: a school class. The sessions are appropriate for children aged 10 to 15

Place: in the class room or outside

Materials: large blank sheets of paper /flip chart, wrapping paper, old calendar sheets, rolls of wallpaper and anything that can be written on/; post-its; pens; markers

Preliminary preparation of the posters:

Write down 'Anger' on one of the posters and use it for summarizing the opinions on **reasons for** and **ways for coping with anger** /in two columns/. Prepare two more posters named 'The conflict and its types' and 'I win - you win' /on the latter the team should have noted down the steps of the method for conflict management BEFORE the implementation of the session/.

Implementation of the session

1. The team members explain the goals of the session and how it is going to be conducted.
2. Energizing game - "Florence" /see Appendix/.
3. Remembering the rules by hanging up the poster from the first session.
4. In order to introduce the feeling of anger, each team member teases a child in the class without any warning /well-meaning, playing/. After that the whole group discusses the reaction of the 'victims' - why did they react in the way they did. Then the roles are changed and the facilitators show a controlled reaction to the teaser which includes talking about their own feelings without attacking the 'aggressor' /e.g. 'What you did to me hurt me a lot. I feel

embarrassed, sad, offended.'/ A question to the 'aggressor' - how does s/he feel after such a reaction from the 'victim'? Does s/he want to continue being a bully or feels discouraged and why?

5. *The facilitator asks what anger is.* All the statements are written down on the '**Anger**' poster. The children are asked what they do when they're angry and irritated. Their anger management tips are noted down. The conclusion that anger must be neither suppressed, nor turned into aggression is drawn. The best reaction is to stay as calm as possible, describe the situation and the feelings it provokes /e.g. 'You always interrupt me. I don't like this and would like you to stop interrupting me in the middle of my thoughts.'/



6. The feeling that most often results in conflicts is anger. Having said this, the facilitator asks the group: 'What is a conflict?' and writes their answers down on the '**Conflict and types of conflicts**' poster.

A conflict is a clash of the views, interests and values of two persons or a group of people. The facilitator asks the children to think about the types of conflicts they are familiar with and writes their answers down. Hints:



- Everyday /at home, between friends, neighbours, in school/
- Social /unemployment, low wages, dismissal /
- Sports /Arsenal - Manchester United/
- Political
- Religious
- Ethnic

7. The facilitator divides the class into small groups according to the total number of the team members. Each small group, supported by a team member, starts a 'pro' and 'cons' argument on a chosen topic /e.g. smoking, heavy metal,

curfews set by parents, etc./ and should reach a compromise. The team member should facilitate the debate. Steps towards a compromise:

- ✓ Why do the children who are 'for' or 'against' think that way? Do they have previous experience about this or have they been influenced by anybody?
- ✓ Is there anything that both parties can agree on?
- ✓ Working towards a decision which satisfies both parties /e.g. DJs should play all sorts of music in order to please the visitors of the disco.

Each group presents their statements.

8. Summarizing the steps of the 'I win - you win' for coping with conflicts /hang up the prepared Conclusion to be reached - mutual interest and compromise. Transition to the next session - prevention or solving of conflicts is a way to protect ourselves against violence.



method poster/.

9. Feedback game - a ball is made out of paper and passed round the circle so that everybody has the chance to say what s/he liked or disliked in the session.

Session No 3 - types of violence and protection from violence

Aim: to improve the understanding of reasons for violence; the situations in which violence arises and how it is provoked; to teach children how to keep themselves away from violence and whom to address in case of violence.

Materials: 10 old newspapers, 10 old magazines, 3 pairs of scissors, 3 glue sticks; big blank sheets of paper / flip chart, wrapping paper, old calendar sheets, rolls of wallpaper or anything that can be written on /; post-its; pens; markers

Preliminary preparation of the posters:

Two explanatory posters are prepared - '**Types of violence**' and '**Child's protection from violence**'. On the latter a sun is drawn, in its circle is written the words 'protection of violence' and the rays are the places to note down the institutions, NGOs and persons to whom the child can turn in case of violence. Furthermore, the team members should prepare lyrics for a rap song before the

session and the class has to choose a melody for singing it. These lyrics are put on a poster too.

The articles from the Convention on the Rights of the Child which are directly related to violence should be written down on a fourth poster. Save the Children's manual "Right Directions" is a useful source.

Implementation of the session

1. The team members explain the goals of the session and how it is going to be conducted.
2. Energizing game - 'Penguins and pelicans' /See Appendix/.



3. Remembering the rules by hanging up the poster from the first session.
4. The facilitator divides the class into 3 groups. The task is to prepare 3 collages out of the old magazines and newspapers about:
 - "the violator's profile",
 - "the victim's profile" ;
 - "the map of violence" /where does it happen/.

The groups have 10 minutes for working on the task. Then they present their collages in front of the class.



5. The facilitator uses them to record the types of violence on the prepared poster. You can use some of the following terms:
- ✓ Verbal aggression /offence, neglect, abuse/;
 - ✓ Physical aggression /collision, hit, injury/;
 - ✓ Mental harassment /oppression, manipulation, provoking guilt and shame/;
 - ✓ Economic dependence /deprivation of food, warmth, means of physical survival, racket/;
 - ✓ Sexual harassment /fornication, blackmailing to obtain sexual favours, comments of a sexual nature/;

6. The facilitator hangs out the SUN poster and asks the class who they would address if they were a victim or witness to a violent act. He/she writes their suggestions in the sun rays. If necessary, the following apply in the Bulgarian context:

- A parent/ relative
- A teacher
- The school principal
- A school committee, advocacy group or a child club
- School psychologist / pedagogic counselor / another adult from school
- Police station / police officer who patrols the neighbourhood /
- The Local Committee for Juvenile Offenders
- **Child Protection Department** / 'Social assistance' directorate
- Non-profit organizations, international ones included
- Religious organizations /the Orthodox Church, the office of a mufti, etc./



7. The poster with the CRC articles is used for a summarizing of the session. The fact that it is an internationally recognized document guaranteeing basic children's rights that is signed by the UN in 1989 and Bulgaria in 1991. The total number of countries that signed the CRC is 191 on which basis they are obliged to protect and observe children's rights as well as to regulate parents and the other responsible institutions /named above/.

8. Closing the session - the 'RAP LYRICS' poster is hung up and the class has to choose a melody and sing the song. There is time for a 'rehearsal' and the performance is the climax to the session.





We liked it a lot - what about you?