



ALLiES eGuide

Second set of Workshops

The second set of workshops also involves parents and teachers. Children are also invited to one of the meetings. This set focuses especially on the issue of communication; in the last meeting the Cuddle questionnaire is introduced and handed out to the parents.

1st Workshop

- Introducing the set of workshops and aims
- An activity to help everyone get to know each other: Get the people together in groups (each one has a number); meet and talk to each other about different topics (name, height, age, how many days of summer holidays, how many great loves). This helps in understanding that our points of view are different, we are all different, and we can attach a different value to the same things (how do we feel when we have to confront each other and cope with other people's values?).
- The last activities help us to discuss values, beliefs, gender and roles.

2nd Workshop

- There can be a lecture on some relevant topic, such as gender sensitive pedagogy, as a starting point for discussion.
- Introduce the "rhythmic dialogue" activity: It's about non-verbal communication, based on sound reproduction. The participants, divided into pairs, have to "talk" to each other, beating their hands and feet, snapping their fingers, making percussion and sounds. Everyone has to "calibrate" to each other, trying to reach a common rhythm.
- Discussion focuses on the different aspects of communication (verbal, non-verbal, posture, voice pitch, emotions involved) and practicing them together by listening and communicating.

3th Workshop

- In this meeting parents, teachers and children are all involved.
- For the first hour, parents and children work separately (parents and teacher in one room, children in another one).
- With children, we focus in particular on emotions, trying to play and recognize them (What do I do when I feel happy, sad, angry or scared? What emotions are easy or difficult to recognize?). Then the children draw a picture of a moment when they felt good or bad with their parents.





- At the same time, during the first hour, the parents and the teacher write about a moment when they felt bad or good with their children or pupils, and about a moment when they felt bad or good when they were children with their parents. Then they discuss permissions and active listening.
- During the second hour, children join the parents and teacher. Every child gives her/his picture to her/his parents and explains the picture. The teachers observe the dynamics. After listening to the children, the parents say what they heard, trying to empathize with and be close to the children's narration.

4th Workshop

- At the beginning of the meeting the experts tell the teachers and parents what they observed during the last meeting (with children, parents and both of them in interaction).
- Carry on by letting them practise "Active Listening". This is characterized by mutual understanding and sympathy. You are able to listen when you show someone that you have understood what s/he tried to say, with all your attitude and behavior (with your eyes, your interest, your body, using open questions, being careful not to criticize).
- Introduce the teachers and parents to the "Cuddle questionnaire" and give it to the parents to be filled in at home

5th Workshop

- Begin this meeting talking about Cuddle, with parents and teachers divided into small groups (for parents: how did the conversation with your child go? How did you feel about filling in the questionnaire?; for teachers: in your opinion, did Cuddle have an impact on your daily work? How did the school framework experimentation go?).
- In a circle, discuss together the strong and weak points noticed during the conversation with children. Some parents may perform a short role play, showing some particularly difficult moments of the conversation with their child. Other parents intervene to support and suggest different solutions to the problems.
- Still in a circle, throw each other a ball of wool: after every throw, everyone has to mention something s/he needs or something s/he can offer to the others. After many throws the threads became a net in our hands. This net represents the complexity of Allies and communication, the relationship between people, the story of the group rising from this project.