

CHESION

*citizenship education
on social inclusion*

AT HOME AT SCHOOL

Toolkit for schools and their families
on social inclusion, citizenship, self-
development and building bridges.



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COLOPHON

Cohesion: Toolkit: At home at school

This toolkit brings together teachers and parents and accordingly the situation at home and at school. The toolkit provides knowledge on communication and interaction with your children/students and easy-to-implement exercises for both parents and teachers of school-going children, aged 10-15.

AUTHORS

Willem Willems
[Elegast VZW.]

EDITORS

Magda Rooze
Sander van Rooijen

DEVELOPED BY

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www.cohesion.eu

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INTRODUCTION

Both schools and parents are essential for children in their personal development. Therefore, it's important that we make a connection between those two worlds. This toolkit contains seven modules around themes which both teachers and families find socially relevant, but also difficult to discuss with children. The modules provide practical methods for teachers and parents to discuss these themes with their children. The modules targeted age group is children from 10 to 14 years old, but they can also be used with older children.

The toolkit offers the following modules:

-  “Get to know each other?” module on acquaintance;
-  “Different but not strange” module on inclusion and diversity;
-  “I choose by myself?!” module on group pressure;
-  “Impulse!” module on conflict resolution;
-  “Talk to me” module on communication;
-  “Coloured truth” module on racism and extremism.

All modules are developed to be practical and to focus on actively working together. They provide exercises you can choose from together with *tips and tricks* on how to discuss the subjects with children.

Schools are free to choose which modules are relevant for them and connect the most with their learning goals. The modules can be used separately. You can find information and instructions on the website (www.cohesion.eu).

It's advised to commence with introduction exercises between teachers and parents, before starting with the other modules. This lowers the threshold for personal contact, builds trust and connects the group. These introduction exercises can be found in the module *Get to know each other*.






LINK WITH LESSON MATERIALS

Cohesion also offers the IMIND lesson material for primary schools and a handbook for teachers with extra background information. You can find both materials on the website (www.cohesion.eu).

IMIND lesson material:





The modular lesson material for primary schools offers six in-class exercises with a focus on:

-  Mindfulness
-  Identity and roles
-  Perspective taking and conflict resolution

The material offers step-by-step instructions of the exercises and a brief section of background information on the topic. The exercises are easy to implement, educative and fun!

Handbook for Teachers:

Would you like to further explore the topics that are covered by the “Toolkit: At home at school”, or in the IMIND lesson material for primary schools? The Cohesion Handbook for Teachers offers you essential background information on:

-  Identity
-  Perspective taking and conflict resolution
-  Political self-efficacy
-  Mindfulness

Additionally, the handbook provides you as a teachers with an insight in the impact of these topics on the life of school-going children and how the topics could be addressed in the classroom.



MODULE 1: GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER


Module on making (lasting) contact





THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This module explains the purpose of conversations. Parents and teachers are given the opportunity to clarify their own questions and expectations. First, the module provides clear agreements that will guide the discussions, and guarantee maximal trust and transparency. Both parents and teachers will get the opportunity to add agreements that are important to them (see Rules and agreements). You can explain these verbally, print them and hand them out to the participants, or write them on the blackboard.

Rules and agreements

As a participant I agree to the following group agreements and I will do my best to comply with them during our conversations.

-  **Confidentiality:** I will treat the personal information that I get from other participants with confidentiality. The trainer too will treat the personal information from all participants as confidential. In other words: what is shared in the group, stays in the group.


-  **Respect:** I will treat the other participants and coaches with respect and I can expect the same from them.
-  **Honesty:** There are no right or wrong answers during the sessions. I will express my opinion honestly.
-  **Active effort:** I will participate actively and will do my best to follow the complete module.
-  **Other:** *To supplement or replace these rules, you can play the needs game. This is how parents come to rules and agreements themselves.*


After establishing the rules and agreements, it is time for the parents and teachers to get to know each other better. This is done, based on active methodologies. Key is the willingness to be open and to participate actively. It is important to acknowledge the acquaintance phase and to invest time into this process.





Goals

Getting to know each other is important in any form of cooperation. In this, the following key elements can be identified:

-  **Train:** train teachers so that they are familiar with the themes and they can discuss them with full confidence with the parents and children.

-  **Connect:** create a connection between teachers and parents. This will clarify that they both share the same goal. The acquaintance phase is very important for this connection.

-  **Trust:** when there is a connection, there can be trust. Trust is important to be able to speak freely and share experiences. By using this module, teachers and parents will gain trust and confidence to speak about difficult issues (e.g. diversity, racism,...).

-  **Speak:** completing the above, creates the opportunity for a beautiful and interesting learning and communication process for both teachers and parents. This is to their own advantage as well as to their children's.



EXERCISES

Exercise 1: Completing sentences

- 🌈 **Goal:** Introducing yourself to the group.
- 🌈 **Participants:** unlimited.
- 🌈 **Duration:** 10 minutes.
- 🌈 **Tools:** a circle of chairs, sentences to complete (see Materials 1: Completing sentences).
- 🌈 **Method:** Teachers and parents are seated in a circle. The group coach asks if someone wants to start (or selects someone). The person who is chosen picks a number between 1 and 20. The coach reads out loud the sentence and the other person completes it. The page with the sentences is passed on to the right. It is now this person's turn to choose someone to pick a number. The game continues until everyone had a turn (including teachers and coach).

Exercise 2: Addressing

- 🌈 **Goal:** getting acquainted with the whole group.
- 🌈 **Participants:** unlimited.
- 🌈 **Duration:** 10-15 minutes.
- 🌈 **Tools:** paper, pen (the actual game can be used, but is not necessary).
- 🌈 **Method:** Everyone receives a piece of paper and writes down three of his/her

qualities (strengths or working points).

The participants walk around and try to learn the qualities of as many players as possible and also why they have written them down. After a while, gather everyone and form two equal groups. Pass the notes from one group to the other. They will now try to match the right note with the right person and tell them why they thought it was a match.

Exercise 3: Crossing the line

- 🌈 **Goal:** realizing that teachers and parents have a lot in common.
- 🌈 **Participants:** unlimited.
- 🌈 **Duration:** 10-15 minutes.
- 🌈 **Tools:** (class)room.
- 🌈 **Method:** Everyone stands at one side of the (class-)room. A statement is made. Every person that agrees with this statement can cross the room. You can ask to share more information, but that is not necessary. After every statement, everyone walks back to the starting position.

Examples of statements:






- I am a parent.
- I have a caring role in my life.








- Sometimes I find it hard to care for someone.
- It is normal for kids to argue with their parents.
- An argument once in a while is good. It clears the air.

completed. If someone has trouble remembering the names, the group can help. You can also reverse the exercise and assign a characteristic to your children/students (eg My name is Ginny and I am the mother of trustworthy Tom and mindful Marieke).

Exercise 4: Quality game

-  **Goal:** getting acquainted with the whole group.
-  **Participants:** unlimited.
-  **Duration:** 10 minutes.
-  **Tools:** chairs in a circle.
-  **Method:** Everybody sits on a chair in the circle. The coach starts by combining his/her name with a characteristic, e.g. "My name is friendly Frank". The person to the left of Frank says: "My name is gentle Ginny and I am sitting next to friendly Frank". The person to the left of Ginny then says: "My name is honest Habiba and I am sitting next to gentle Ginny who is sitting next to friendly Frank." And so on, until the circle is

Exercise 5: Talent cloud

-  **Goal:** letting the participants share their own and their children's talents.
-  **Participants:** unlimited.
-  **Duration:** 10-15 minutes.
-  **Tools:** talent cloud, pen and paper.
-  **Method:** All participants are given a pen and paper (or the form, see Materials 2: Talent cloud). The coach reads the questions out loud and lets the participants answer them on their piece of paper. The coach asks the participants if they want to share with the group what they have written down. This exercise can also be done orally.



MATERIALS 1: COMPLETING SENTENCES

1. I love
2. My son / daughter / pupils
3. I feel
4. I don't look forward to
5. Sometimes I feel sad
6. I can't manage to
7. Sometimes I am afraid
8. My thoughts
9. I need
10. I feel comfortable when
11. The future
12. What bothers me
13. I detest
14. I feel very
15. I would like to
16. My biggest worry is
17. This test is
18. Later I expect
19. Where I live is
20. I think school is
21. Sometimes I don't want to
22. I would rather
23. New situations
24. I feel safe



MATERIALS 2: TALENT CLOUD



1. What are the top talents of your child(ren)?
2. What are your own top talents?
3. Which talent would you like to see more developed in your child(ren)?
4. Who in the group or his/her environment could help him/her with this?



MODULE 2: DIFFERENT BUT NOT STRANGE





Module on social inclusion and diversity

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Our modern society is highly diverse. This means that the majority of the populations exists of inhabitants with a migration background. Feeling safe in school, the neighbourhood and their other social surroundings is essential for the development of children. Since school is a big part in a child's life, it is important to work on social inclusion in the school environment regardless race, religion, ancestry, disability or sexual orientation. When integrating social inclusion in education, it's important to be aware of the fact that within the school there are many differences regarding norms and values. We need to give teachers the appropriate tools to cope with this diversity, so they can, in turn, teach the children. In a society characterized by diversity, this should also be reflected in the school policy, the teaching methods and the education. We cannot ignore the differences and be "colour-blind". In this case, ignorance can be interpreted by students as if their identity (culture, religion, ancestry) is not important or even has no place at school.

Goals

The goals of this module are:

-  To accept diversity and work on social inclusion.
-  To avoid prejudice and generalization and discuss this topic with the students/children.
-  To develop an open mind and stimulate to learn from each other.
-  To be able to function in different contexts, changing circumstances and new situations.

When we deal with diversity in a positive way, we create an inclusive environment where children can feel good about themselves and appreciated. It's important that children hear this message at home *and* at school. By doing so we build a society that is based on tolerance, inclusion, and fairness. What does a person need to know and be able to do, to deal with diversity successfully? They should accept diversity, have an open mind, and be able to interact openly with one another to learn from each other.

Advantages and benefits

Working on inclusion has several advantages for students, teachers and parents:



- When we accept diversity as normal, we can look at inclusion as a way to improve wellbeing and achievements.
- The learning environment will be more pleasant for students and teachers.
- The active participation of the students increases and their learning experience improves.
- Children will feel better about themselves. This will contribute to a pleasant atmosphere in the classroom and at home.
- Children will feel accepted without having to prove themselves or having to change to belong.
- Children learn that everybody is different, yet everybody is included.
- If the school has a policy of social inclusion, the parents will also feel more welcome in the school and experience less thresholds to talk with the teachers, and ask questions.
- Teachers with different professional and personal backgrounds can work together and learn from each other.

Tips & Tricks






Diversity is everywhere. When you read the papers or listen to the news you know that diversity is a daily reality. There are many leads to work around diversity. Also use the cultural diversity in your own class, school or neighbourhood. The following tips & tricks can help:

- Offer enough variety in the educational approach. For example, use current events or informative film material.
- Provide students with opportunities to learn from each other.
- Normalise being different and accept those differences.
- Use examples that show diversity as being enriching.
- Diversity is a good starting point to discuss competences like empathy, respect and responsibility.
- Diversity isn't always easy and can even be a source of conflict. Especially then it's important to keep talking to each other and look for common grounds.
- Lead by example!



EXERCISES

Exercise 1: Movie clip

-  **Goal:** start a discussion on inclusion and discrimination.
-  **Participants:** unlimited.
-  **Duration:** 10 minutes.
-  **Tools:** screen, laptop, beamer, internet.
When you work with a little group you don't need a screen and beamer.
-  **Method:** Give a short introduction on the movie clip (see below) and ask the participants to watch the clip when thinking about the following questions:
 - What did you see?
 - What did you notice?
 - What did stick with you?
 - What did you think?
 - What did you feel?
 - What do you want to share?







Afterwards, discuss the questions with the group or in little groups when it's a big group.

Film clip:




<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mqbRRuiAhXg>

Imam Khalid Benhaddou visits schools to talk with students about Islam, radicalisation and terrorism. "I want to listen to the view of youngsters and give answers to their questions."

Exercise 2: Musical chairs

-  **Goal:** learn about each other's names and ancestry.
-  **Participants:** max 20 per group.
-  **Duration:** 10 minutes.
-  **Tools:** As many chairs as participants, world globe and rope ,timer/stop-watch.
-  **Method:** All chairs are put in a circle and all participants stand on their own chair. Everybody needs to be in a particular order without touching the ground. The time is not important, it's just to make it more exciting. The participants are instructed that they have 3 minutes to stand in order of birth-place, name (alphabetically), number of children, age,....
-  **Note:** If people don't feel comfortable standing on chairs, they can stand behind the chairs but must touch one chair at all times.

Exercise 3: The newspaper

-  **Goal:** start a conversation on inclusion and discrimination with your students/child(ren).
-  **Participants:** unlimited.
-  **Duration:** 10 minutes.



- 🌍 **Tools:** a newspaper, magazine, article, etc. on paper or online.
- 🌍 **Method:** Read the article, newspaper together with your child. Discuss the following questions afterwards:
 - 🌍 What do you think of this?
 - 🌍 How do you deal with this in your school, with your friends?
 - 🌍 If you were the director of the school, how would you deal with this?
- 🌍 Use the *Tips & Tricks* to start the conversation.

Exercise 4: Facing prejudice

- 🌍 **Goal:** start a conversation about prejudices. Realising that everybody is different but yet the same.
- 🌍 **Duration:** 10 minutes.
- 🌍 **Tools:** screen, laptop, beamer, internet. When you work with a little group you don't need a screen and beamer.
- 🌍 **Method:** Watch the clip of the experiment on prejudices. When it feels safe enough, you can try it yourself with your children/students.

20 years ago, psychologist Arthur Aron found out that looking into each other's eyes for 4 minutes can bring people closer together. On that basis they conducted a little experiment:

refugees and Europeans were sat together and were asked to look in each other's eyes for 4 minutes. The participants were random people that didn't know each other and met for the first time on the experiment. The situations are real with spontaneous and real reactions. The refugees were mainly from Syria and did live in Europe for less than a year.

After watching the clip, discuss the following questions:

- What did you see?
- What did you notice?
- What did stick with you?
- What did you think?
- What did you feel?
- What do you want to share?


Video :


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f7XhrXUoD6U>

Exercise 5: My neighbourhood

- 🌍 **Goal:** Get an idea on how someone is embedded in his or her neighbourhood and which cultures, religions and people are part of it.
- 🌍 **Participants:** unlimited.
- 🌍 **Duration:** 10 – 15 minutes.




 **Tools:** a big piece of paper and markers.

 **Method:** Let the parents draw their own picture of their neighbourhood. You can draw such a map by asking questions about that neighbourhood:

- Who lives in your neighbourhood?
- Is there a lot of diversity?
- What is making them different: religion? ancestry?...
- Is everybody getting along? Why?
- Can you get along with everybody?

- Are other neighbourhoods different?
- What would you like to see differently in your neighbourhood?
- What does your ideal neighbourhood look like?

Discuss the pictures in the group. Parents and teachers can also do this exercise with their children/students.

 **Note:** You can also do this exercise around the class group, peer group, school...



MODULE 3: I CHOOSE BY MYSELF!

Module on group pressure

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Everybody belongs to different sorts of groups. Especially in the life of youngsters, those groups play an important role... Often, we forget the strength of these groups. Peer pressure is one of these strengths. Peer pressure is widely represented and everyone gets affected by it. It can be positive, but it can also be negative. The one form has greater consequences for the individual than the other form. Every person experiences these forms of peer pressure on a different way. The group has a major influence on the behavior of young people.

There are many positive elements of peer pressure, like motivation, peace of mind, security, support, etc... Positive peer pressure leads to positive effects for the individual. For youngsters, it can express itself in a positive self-image, connectedness and not feeling alone. Therefore, it's important that we support and stimulate the social life of our children. Think about the positive influence of a youth movement, hobby or sport. However, young people can also be subject to negative peer pressure. When someone says 'no', he/she may be at risk of being excluded from the group.

Negative peer pressure can start when someone doesn't want to do some things while the group does. Actions which don't fit with the person's values and norms, or which lead to an internal conflict between good and bad. The group can encourage this person to do these things anyway. A group with negative peer pressure to the individual isn't a good group to be part of.






It's very important that youngsters are part of a group of friends. The environment of the young person has an important role in personal development. Youngsters think it's important what other people think of them. During puberty, feeling pressure from peers is a normal situation. Youths need to go through these situations to develop themselves.

Goals

What can you do to help your child make a way through this challenging period? To help them to learn to appreciate his/her own unique qualities and to build and maintain their self-confidence for the future?



To answer the questions above, we formulate following goals in this module:

-  Teach kids that they don't have to let go of their unique characteristics, just to belong to a group.
-  Talk *with* them about group pressure, and make them aware about the process of peer pressure.
-  Get an insight on which groups your child belongs to (friends, school, etc.).
-  Increase the resilience of your children by working on self-esteem and self-sustainability.
-  Make them aware of their own values and morals and let them compare them with the values and morals of the society.






We should not forget the importance of positive peer pressure. A group can help youngsters in developing themselves. It can help them find out who they are and what they want to achieve. By looking at others, they see how other children are living and they can see if they also want it that way or not. They see how others react to the behaviour of others as well. By doing so, they learn what normal and abnormal behaviour is. Based on this they will make their own norms and values. In a positive group the members learn from each other and they have fun. Own

ideas will be accepted and something is being done with these ideas. That's why it's so important as a parent/the one responsible for parenting to get a view on the groups your child(ren) are part of.

Advantages and benefits

Being resilient means that children have enough self-esteem and can stand up for themselves. It also means they can empathise with others, can ask for help and dare to say no when they want to.

Building resilience has important benefits for pupils, parents and teachers:

-  Pupils feel safer at school.
-  Less children will bully and will be bullied.
-  Students stand up for themselves and are able to resist negative peer pressure.
-  Improvement of the communication skills because aggressiveness and passiveness will be replaced by assertive reactions.
-  Students develop more self-control, self-confidence and self-dependence



Tips & Tricks

As mentioned above, peer pressure is present everywhere. That's why it's important to improve resilience against it. There are tips and tricks that you can use as a parent and/or teacher. During the exercises these tips and tricks can be useful too.

- 🌈 Get to know the group of friends of your children and show interest. Especially the friends who are the most important for your child. Ask why they are friends.
- 🌈 Know where your child is when he/she isn't home and what they do online... (follow a computer class if necessary. Also try to be 'active' on social media yourself)
- 🌈 Practice with your children to adopt a firm stance when he/she want to give a message. > see exercise 'learn to say no'.
- 🌈 Ensure open communication within the family or class. This will create a safe space to speak and show your feelings. This will ensure that children develop an understanding of their own feelings and those of others.
- 🌈 Give compliments about positive behaviour. Example: I think it's really cool you clearly said 'no' to your friends.
- 🌈 Ask for the opinion of children to improve assertiveness. What do you think


about it? Would you do it or not? This allows them to learn how to indicate their boundaries.

The following tips allow you to get an idea of the social groups your child(ren) is/are part of and limit any negative influences coming from these groups.

- 🌈 Don't try to forbid friendships immediately! This will make it exciting and the friendship will get more intense.
- 🌈 Dare to give new friendships a chance. Invite the friends. Like that, you can notice positive and negative behaviour sooner and you get to know the friends better.
- 🌈 Stay involved and invest in contact with your child. Though good contact the children will identify more with your values and norms. This can improve the resistance to peer pressure.
- 🌈 Show interest in every friendship your child has. Also the ones you aren't too happy about. As a result your child will get the feeling that friend get a fair chance.
- 🌈 Trust your child in making the good choices in his/her friendships but make sure they know that you will always there for them to talk. Search for alternatives together if the group of friends



is limited, for example a sports club or youth movement.


 Indicate clear boundaries, for example when there is vandalism of your child

skips classes. Talk about their own behaviour and focus as less as possible at the behaviour of the other person(s).




EXERCISES


Exercise 1: Open conversation

 **Goal:** get an open conversation about the group of friends of your child(ren).


 **Participants:** unlimited.

 **Duration:** 10 – 15 min.

 **Tools:** none.

 **Method:** Ask your child following questions. Do it in a quiet and positive situation. When you ask this during a conflict, your child can feel attacked and controlled.


- Who are your friends?
- What do you do with your friends?
- How did you meet them?
- Where and how often do you see each other?
- What will you do for those friends?
- What will those friends do for you?
- What do they mean to you?

 **Tips for getting to know the group of friends better and limit negative peer pressure:**


- Don't forbid!
- Give chances.
- Stay involved.
- Show interest.


- Give confidence and search for alternatives.
- Indicate clear boundaries when there's undesirable behaviour.


Exercise 2: Qualities and talents

 **Goal:** build on self-confidence and confidence in others.

 **Participants:** unlimited.

 **Duration:** 10 – 15 min.

 **Tools:** list with qualities, quality game (see Materials 3: Qualities).






 **Method:** Talk with your child(ren) about what their qualities are and what they can work on. For some youngsters it's hard to put this into words, so you for example you can use a list of qualities or the quality game. Start with an example yourself: "I think you're helpful because you help me with the dishes". For teachers it can be: "I think you're orderly because your desk is always tidy". Then let the children try it. Always ask why they assign themselves a certain quality.

- You can also let them assign a quality to someone else (someone of the family, from class, a friend).
- When they find it hard to do, you can give some examples about their



qualities and let them think about situations that showed this quality.






Exercise 3: Learn to say 'no'

-  **Goal:** learning to say 'no' in a constructive way.
-  **Participants:** unlimited.
-  **Duration:** 10 – 15 min.
-  **Tools:** none.
-  **Method:** Say 'no' in 3 different ways. For example very softly, very high-pitched, and very loud. How does it feel? Then switch places. How does the different ways overcome the other person? Do you feel the difference?

- Take a solid stance. You do this by putting your legs slightly apart and bow your knees a little. Your feet are steadily on the ground. Make sure your knees are slightly bent. Put your arms beside your body. Press your shoulder blades to each other. Straighten your back. Your chest is slightly forward and you look straight ahead. Focus on your breathing through your belly. You can test your stability by gently pushing against the hip or shoulder.
- Practice a few times to say a strong 'no' with a firm, low voice from your belly.

- Make eye contact with the other person. Like this, you know if he/she gets your message. Consciousness about your body language will make you more conscious about your emotions.

Exercise 4: Burning building

-  **Goal:** explaining the method of peer pressure on the basis of an experiment.
-  **Participants:** maximum a class group.
-  **Duration:** 15 – 20 min.
-  **Tools:** display, laptop, beamer, internet. When you're in a small group everyone can sit around one laptop and you won't need a beamer.
-  **Method:** Give a short introduction (see Themes/topics) about following movie clip and ask the group members to remember the following questions, so you can discuss them later.

Questions:

- How would you react?
 - Why aren't the subjects doing anything?
 - Why is it important to be part of a group?
 - Why is it important to stay yourself/stand up for your own opinion?
- Peer pressure can make you do things you wouldn't do if you're alone. There is also a



so-called 'negative peer pressure'. Can peer pressure be positive too? Why (not)? Explain with an example.

You can do the conversation in duo's or small groups first. You can see and discuss the movie clips in class or at home with your child(ren).






"A few subjects will be invited to participate a brainstorm session. A fire is staged.. How will the subjects react when they are alone and how do they react in group? "

Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vjP22DpY>

[Yh8](#)

Exercise 5: Game of theses

-  **Goal:** discuss the theme peer pressure on the basis of theses.
-  **Participants:** maximum a class group.
-  **Duration:** 10 - 20 min.
-  **Tools:** list of theses (see Materials 4: Theses).
-  **Method:** You read a these and ask the children to reflect on it. You can make the exercise a bit more interactive by letting the children argument about the pro's and con's and try to convince the others to change their opinion. The tips concerning attitude in *Exercise 3: Learn to say 'no'* can be used to transfer the message.



MATERIALS 3: QUALITIES

- Adventurous
- Alert
- Ambitious
- Attention
- Attentive
- Brave
- Creative
- Driven
- Enthousiastic
- Flexible
- Helpful
- Honest
- Modest
- Patient
- Sensitive
- Simple
- Skillful
- Socially
- Trusty
- Vigor
- Beautiful
- Cheerful
- Clear
- Courage
- Critical
- Curious
- Generous
- Handsome
- Handy
- Humoristic
- Idealistic
- Open
- Openly
- Optimistic
- Orderly
- Passionate
- Power
- Relaxed
- Sober
- Sweet
- Calm
- Carefully
- Caring
- Content
- Factual
- Flexible
- Gently
- Justly
- Kind
- Playful
- Precisly
- Royal
- Serious
- Smart
- Spontaneous
- Strong
- Tactful



MATERIALS 4: THESES

1. When someone influences you in a bad way, it's a bad friend anyway.
2. True friendship is: always being there for each other.
3. Peer pressure is the main reason why youngsters commit crimes.
4. In my life, my friends are the most important people.
5. When I say 'no' to my friends, I will disappoint them.
6. When you want to be part of a group, you need to adjust yourself.
7. Acting tough is part of being a youngster.
8. I tell my friends everything, really everything.
9. Everyone has bad friends.
10. Peer pressure is not that bad, you can learn from it.
11. I'm easy to influence and that will cause trouble for me.
12. I act the same when I'm in a group as when I'm alone.
13. I can say 'no' and stick to my opinion.



MODULE 4: IMPULSE!

Module on conflict resolution

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Initially, we do not think of an argument as something positive. Conflicts are annoying, cause tension and frustration and confront us with our shortcomings. And yet, arguing can be very meaningful. There are conflicts in every social relationship. People are just different. Despite of all these individual differences, people have to work together or live together everywhere. Sometimes this requires quite a capacity to adapt and accept. When we feel we have reached our limit in this matter, a conflict may arise. Even more so in children and teenagers because they are still developing their social interaction and are still learning about (moral/emotional) boundaries.

A conflict offers a lot of opportunities. Conflicts cause people to 'wake up'. As soon as someone addresses your attitude or behaviour, your thoughts start racing. Is this person right? What exactly did you do? Was that really so wrong? However, these analytical skills are still developing during childhood. They usually blame the other person and take little responsibility for their own actions. Conflicts are moments when you learn more about the other person and

about yourself. After all, the other party is showing something about himself by starting the conflict. By doing so, he/she shows what is important to him/her, and what his/her norms and values are... When you are part of the conflict, you do the same thing: you show yourself. You let the other person know how you think, what your opinion is and what you value.

No matter how positive you evaluate conflicts, the fact remains that conflicts cause stress. If we experience stress, we communicate less effectively. Stress prepares us to fight or flee, not to behave assertively. It is important to learn to control this tension so that it doesn't influence the conflict in a negative manner. Breathing is an important element to obtain rest. We will cover this in the exercises.

Big and small conflicts are very common both at school and in families. To share a small space with a lot of people is not something you learn immediately. Conflicts can ruin the atmosphere in the class or at home, but it is not recommended to avoid them. Children will no doubt experience conflicts later in life. Instead of dismissing them as something annoying, we can



also see them as exercises to learn how to deal with conflicts under the motto 'learning by doing'. This applies to conflicts between children as well as to conflicts between adults and children. Usually we, and especially children, choose the 'easy' solution: the counter-attack. However, this is not the most effective way. Children often don't think about the consequences of their actions. A *good* conflict is quite different from a shouting rage. But how do you do this?

Goals

It is from the viewpoint described above that we try to reach the following goals with this module:

- 🌍 Be aware of the different ways to react and their effect on others. Learn children to react assertively.
- 🌍 Teach children to think about their own actions and their consequences. Emphasize and train the principle of 'think before you act'.
- 🌍 Learn children to stay calm in difficult times or moments of stress by focusing on your breathing.

- 🌍 Show children how to resolve their conflict. This requires a neutral role as a parent or teacher.

Advantages and benefits

Everyone can and will deal with conflicts in a different way. Every approach has its pros and cons (see Conflict management scheme). Positively empowering children to acquire insights in conflict management has a number of general advantages for the child as an individual, but also for the child in the class room and family context:

- 🌍 It increases independence and self-sustainability.
- 🌍 It teaches how to take responsibility for your own actions, to engage in dialogue, to listen and to think before acting.
- 🌍 Serious conflicts in the family or at school are reduced. The atmosphere will improve.
- 🌍 The child can learn to remain calm in difficult situations.



Conflict management scheme

<p>Relation → Not important Issue → Not important</p> <p>Avoid</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Don't react. - Choose another way. <p>Advantage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No waste of energy. <p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not tackling the situation. - Situation may reoccur. 	<p>Relation → Less important Issue → Important Issue > Relation</p> <p>Fight</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impose. - Position of power. <p>Advantage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Big chance of getting it your way. <p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not a practical strategy. - May have big consequences.
<p>Relation → Important Issue → Less important Relation > Issue</p> <p>Adapt</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Put your own interests aside. <p>Advantage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gain social credit. <p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Less practical. - Conflict is not being resolved. - Frustrations. - Not very assertive. 	<p>Relation → Important Issue → Important Relation = Issue</p> <p>Negotiate / Cooperate</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Let go off your own interests. - Search for common interests. <p>Advantage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reach common interests. <p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Time consuming. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both parties must be willing to participate.



Tips & Tricks

Keep the following tips and tricks in mind when confronted with conflict at home or in the class room:

- Do not underestimate a child's skills to find a solution. Children often come up with very creative ideas. Intervene only when necessary.
- Try to stimulate the children to find a solution by staying close (social pressure).
- Create a safe social and emotional environment. A good relationship between children and their teachers and parents will positively influence their conflicts.
- Encourage the less confident and resilient children to stand up for themselves.

You can give children the following tips and rules when there is a conflict. If you are involved in the conflict as a teacher or parent, it is important that you apply these tips as well.

- Take turns speaking and listening.
- Don't speak too long.
- Speak clearly, do not speak in the past.
- Dare to talk about your feelings. Some feelings are hard to put into words, especially in the context of a conflict.

However, do try to describe your emotions so that the others know how you feel.

- Use "I": "I feel... when you..."
- Listen to what the other is saying.
- Ask for an explanation if you don't understand something.
- Look at the person you are speaking to. Listen actively: nod, say yes, hmm, to show that you are listening.
- Make sure you have understood each other. You can do so by repeating in your own words or summarizing what the other person has said. Understanding the other person doesn't have to mean that you agree with him.
- Close the discussion with good agreements. A good agreement is: Concrete, Workable and Accepted by both/all parties.






It's not about who wins or loses. If one 'wins' in a conflict, then the relationship 'loses'. Think about whether that should be your aim. If you want the relationship to remain good or even improve, it is important to find a solution that satisfies both parties.

Note: The communication module *Talk to me* discusses many common themes and topics and combines well with this module.



EXERCISES

Exercise 1: Speaker's Corner






-  **Goal:** detecting different ways of reacting and arguing.
-  **Participants:** unlimited.
-  **Duration:** 10-20 minutes.
-  **Tools:** class room, (possibly) chairs, propositions.
-  **Method:** Person A is assigned to defend opinion A, person B is assigned to defend the opposite opinion (even though these might not be their own opinions). The public observes one of the parties and afterwards describes what they have seen. What worked and what didn't? To make it more interactive, you can let everyone join in. You can take person A's or B's chair at any given time. The person who was sitting on that chair stops talking and joins the rest.

Propositions:

- All children must be obligated to attend school for 2 weeks during the summer holiday.
- All school toilets must be gender neutral.
- In disasters, it is just as important to rescue animals as it is to rescue humans.
- A bicycle helmet should be obligatory for children under 18.

- As a standard, the lesson program must include one hour of physical activity a day.
- There must be a maximum age limit to join Facebook.
- There must be internet-free days.
- Someone who bullies, must be bullied back by the whole class.

Exercise 2: Crossing the line – who reacts?






-  **Goal:** get an insight into the different ways of reacting + theory.
-  **Participants:** unlimited > depending on the space.
-  **Duration:** 10-20 minutes > depending on the discussion.
-  **Tools:** blackboard or large paper and felt-tip.
-  **Method:** Everyone starts at one end of the room. Read a situation out loud. Those who would react to this situation move to the opposite side of the room. They are then asked how they would react to this situation. The different reactions are written down. Tip: group the different reactions in 3 columns, namely: passive, aggressive and assertive. Do not yet name these columns. Ask those who didn't cross why they wouldn't react.



After the propositions, discuss the different ways of reacting that were written on the board or paper. Ask if they can name these categories (passive, aggressive and assertive).

Finally, explain the difference between the 3 ways (see Materials 6: Crossing the line).






Exercise 3: Stop – think - act

-  **Goal:** let children think about their actions before acting. Let them reflect on the consequences of their actions.
-  **Participants:** unlimited.
-  **Duration:** 10-20 minutes > depending on the number of exercises.
-  **Tools:** theory STA-method (see Materials 7: STA-method).
-  **Method:** Explain the STA-method and use it with examples that you have experienced. If you find it hard to come up with your own examples, you can make up situations. You can also use the situations that were used in *Exercise 2: Crossing the line*.

You can apply the STA-method on difficult situations that need resolving or on conflicts that didn't achieve the desired outcome. Let the children think about what happened and let them use

the STA-method to come up with alternative actions.

Exercise 4: Breathing – Focus Line

-  **Goal:** control your breathing in difficult situations and focus.
-  **Participants:** unlimited.
-  **Duration:** 10-15 minutes.
-  **Tools:** classroom, (imaginary) line on the floor.
-  **Method:** Everyone stands in line, next to each other. Everyone focuses on a distant point in front of him. The aim is not to react and not to lose the focus on that one point. The coach tries to get their attention. Whoever loses the focus, takes one step back.

There are different rounds:

- The coach tries to distract with motion.
- The coach tries to distract with motion and sound.
- The coach tries to distract with motion, sound as well as by calling out the person's name.

Do the exercise without tips first. In a next phase, ask to focus on abdominal breathing. This is how it's done: Short inhale, long exhale, in and out of your belly. This way you can build a strong abdominal breathing. You can place your hand



on your belly to feel it. Abdominal breathing can be taught at home or in the classroom.

Snake game

- 🌈 Let the children sit on a chair with their backs straight.
- 🌈 Let them put their hands on their belly and let them focus on the instructions you are about to give.
- 🌈 Let them inhale through the nose during 4 seconds. You can count for them. They will experience how their belly expands.
- 🌈 Let them release the air by mimicking the sound of a snake. This is a strong hissing sound which they have to make as long as possible.

Exercise 5: Newspaper article

- 🌈 **Goal:** discuss aggression and conflicts by using a newspaper article + learn to think critically.
- 🌈 **Participants:** unlimited.
- 🌈 **Duration:** 10-15 minutes.
- 🌈 **Tools:** selection of articles (printed or online).
- 🌈 **Method:** Go through the headlines of the news with the children and pick

out articles about conflict or aggression. Take into account the age of the children for certain articles. For young children you can pick articles about e.g. bullying, for older children you can pick articles about e.g. war, senseless random violence.

Some articles can be linked with the children's reality and environment. Give them time and space to think about this critically.

Example article:

https://www.bbc.com/news/world-australia-51582696?intlink_from_url=https://www.bbc.com/news/_topics/c2822r1rzlxt/school-bullying&link_location=live-reporting-story

Discuss the following questions:

- 🌈 What did you read? What kind of conflicts / violence are described?
- 🌈 Why do people use violence?
- 🌈 How could the aggressive person(s) have reacted better?
- 🌈 What are the pros and cons of this aggression / conflict?
- 🌈 How would you react if you witnessed this aggression?



MATERIALS 5: CROSSING THE LINE

Theory

Passive	Aggressive	Assertive
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Avoid - Ignore - Adapt - Run away - Undergo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fight - Curse - Yell - Insult - Bully 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engage in dialogue - Mediate - Try to reach a solution - Respect each other's opinion
The other's interest is bigger than yours.	Your interest is bigger than the other's	The interests of both parties are equal
The relation is not balanced. Other > yourself = no self-respect	Relation is not balanced. Other < yourself = no respect for the other	Relation is balanced Other = yourself = mutual respect
Advantages:	Advantages:	Advantages:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No waste of energy - Gain social credit towards the other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chance to get right and enforce power from the other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Search for common interests - Big chance of solution - Equality between the parties
Disadvantages:	Disadvantages:	Disadvantages:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not a good strategy - Not tackling the situation - Situation may reoccur - Less practical - Conflict is not being resolved - Frustrations - Not very assertive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not a practical strategy - May have big consequences - No solution - Situation gets worse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Time consuming - Both parties must be willing to participate

Assertive behavior is not always effective, but being assertive should be the first option. If this doesn't work, it is better to leave the situation. You have tried to solve the issue but have failed because of circumstances. If the other party is stubborn and starts behaving aggressively, you can defend yourself and stand up for yourself.



Situations

Situation 1

A while ago a friend borrowed 50 euro from you. He promised to pay you back within a week. He didn't. You are frustrated that he doesn't pay you back on his own accord. Who reacts? What if you walked up to your friend, asked for the money back and he would say "50 €? I don't recall borrowing 50 €." Who reacts and how?

Situation 2 > (for younger children use the sports club as an example)

You are out clubbing with friends (Create an atmosphere first, which clubs do they like?..). It is very busy. You have just ordered a drink and you are talking to your friends. Just when you want to take a sip, someone passes by and bumps into you. You spill your drink all over your clothes.

Situation 3 > (for younger children use the sports club as an example)

You are still going out that evening. From a distance you've had eye contact several times with the boy who bumped into you. You see him mumbling and pointing in your direction. You could not hear what he said.

Situation 4

You are sitting by yourself on the bus. A foreign boy is bullied by 2 other boys because of the colour of his skin.

Situation 5

The same situation. You are still sitting by yourself on the bus. A boy is being bullied by two boys because (they think) he is gay.

Situation 6

Someone says "Your mother is a ..."



MATERIALS 6: STA-METHOD

Stop	Think	Act
		
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Don't react immediately. Calm down. > see breathing2. Look/listen to the situation.3. Clarify the situation.4. Look at your own feeling.5. What do I want to see happening?	<ol style="list-style-type: none">6. Think off possible solutions/ outcome.7. Evaluate solutions/ outcome.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">8. Choose the best solution/outcome.9. Execute solution/outcome.10. Check if the desired outcome was reached. If not, start over with Stop-Think-Act.



Questionnaire

STOP

What is the problem?

.....

What do I think/feel?

.....

What do I want to see happening?

.....

THINK

What can I do?

.....

What would happen, what are the consequences?

.....

ACT

Choose a solution:

.....

Desired result: yes / no



MODULE 5: TALK TO ME

Module on communication

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Communication between youths and their parents isn't always easy. It's often fragile. Parents find it hard to balance between supervision/control and communication. Youths between 13 and 17 years don't tell much to their parents. This doesn't have to be problematic. Often during adolescence, parents tend to let their children have more freedom. So the control by the parents decreases. Youths are more free to make their own choices, for example what they're going to do after school. Not all youths need to have a conversation about this with their parents. It teaches the children to be more independent. However, this fits to a certain extent in the development of the child, it also can have a negative effect. It complicates the supervision by the parents.

Most parents will recognize the following situation: "As a child he told me everything, as teenager he tells me nothing at all." When you try to have a conversation, you get minimal and reluctant answers or an intense argument starts. Some youths think it's annoying if their parents want to talk. However it is important. Studies show that there is a connection between the

communication between parents and their children and engaging in criminal behavior. When youths don't behave well (bullying, skipping class, fighting, stealing, doing drugs, etc.), they often get corrected by their parents or when it happens in school, by the teachers.

The quality of the relationship between parents and their children is very important. If the relationship is good (they trust each other, listen to each other and the parents stimulate their children to be independent), youths talk more about what they're doing. This allows for better supervision by their parents. Youths that have a good relationship with their parents show less misbehavior. Also the studies suggest that in good functioning families parents don't need to demand information or adjust to strict rules. This might even work counterproductive. In families with less warm parent-children relationships, rules and control by parents can be positive. Youths show less delinquent behavior in such situations.

You can learn to talk with teenagers. But there are 2 important factors we need to keep in mind.

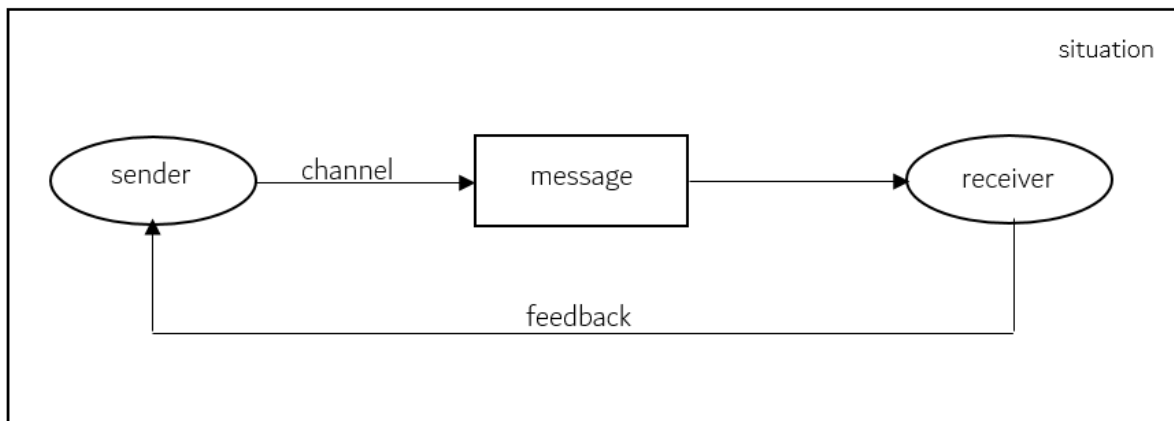


Independence: Some teenagers want more freedom than they should. At the same time there are parents that allow them less freedom than they could handle. This can cause a lot of agitation and frustration. It's important that a teenager learns to be independent by little steps. Good communication with the parents is important in this process. Also at school there are rules and agreements that the teenagers finds obstructive. Although

these are mostly general agreements, it's important to speak openly about it with teenagers without letting them overstep the limits.

Abstract thinking: Teenagers think less black-white but make nuances by themselves. It helps them to judge situations better. . As not everything is black or white, disagreement regarding rules, allows for the possibility to discuss or negotiate. Parents, teachers, and schools, need to justify more why they take certain decisions.

Theory on communication



- Sender: person who gives the message.
- Channel: the way how people communicate (letter, language, phone, mail, ...)
- Message: content of the communication.
- Receiver: person who receives the message.
- Feedback: the receiver's reaction about the message.
- Noise: all factors who make the communication difficult.

People can't 'not communicate'. They will always communicate, they will always influence each other. The human being is always looking for interaction with another human being. Through

this interaction it becomes possible to get to know yourself as a person. What someone says and does, isn't only determined by the individual but also (and sometimes even more) by others.






In other words, the interactions between people and the behaviour they show aren't a coincidence. Everyone behaves differently, depending on the people they interact with. A human being gets influenced by his/her peers and will influence them in return.

Obviously people know what they do, still they can't (fore)see the effects of their behaviour. In any way, action gives reaction. An aggressive action often provoke a loaded response. In several situations it can escalate to a conflict which provokes a gap between the people that are involved.





Goals

In this module we strengthen the mutual communication and learn to use a few tools that can be of assistance in this..

-  Strengthening the communication between parents/teachers and youths.
-  Making youths aware of the effect of communication and how they can use it in a positive way.
-  Improving communication within the school and family.

Tips & Tricks

We formulate some general tips below for the communication with youths.

-  Speak for yourself. Use the I-message. Name your feelings and stimulate the child to do the same. Example: "I'm worried when you come home late" and not "Well, you're late again" (see exercise 2).
-  Make clear you address the behavior and not the person. Youths will feel attacked very quickly. That's why it's important to focus on the behavior and the effect of this behavior on you or others.
-  Take your time for the conversation. Assume the adolescent knows him-/herself best. Keep your opinion to yourself and give the child the time to tell his story, without interrupting. Try to wait with solutions or a judgement, but ask questions and let your child explain his/her point of view. Sometimes emotions can run high. At that moment it sometimes makes sense to stop the conversation and resume later.
-  Ask open and neutral questions. The trick is to ask questions that stimulate your child to tell more things. Try not



to suppose how they must feel or react. Asking too much questions isn't necessary. It will feel like an interrogation. Ask "how-questions". This can feel forced at first but can lead to surprising answers (see exercise 5).

- 🌈 Search for a solution together and strengthen youths. Ask what they can and will do about the situation and if they have any expectations from you. In this way the child feels taken seriously and chances are good that you can work it out together.

- 🌈 Argue in a good way. "Because I say so" isn't good enough and provokes resistance.

- 🌈 Don't argue endlessly. You still are the parent/teacher, so you can set your limits... Just say: "We are your parents/teachers and we find this important. End." Take resistance and protest into account.

Note: The module on conflict resolution *IMPULS!* discusses many common themes and topics and combines well with this module.



EXERCISES

Exercise 1: Pass-through sentence

- 🌈 **Goal:** insight in the theory of communication + noise.
- 🌈 **Participants:** unlimited.
- 🌈 **Duration:** 10 – 15 min.
- 🌈 **Tools:** (sentence from) newspaper article.
- 🌈 **Method:** Everyone stands on one line. The first in line tells (whispering) a story from the newspaper article to the second person, this person tells it to the third person etc. Afterwards you compare the original story with the story at the end.
 - What was difficult?
 - How come?
 - Are there situations when communication is difficult?

Example sentence: *Twenty-four little crazy kids with purple hair play in the black mud with their pink underpants with white dots while mom is tanning with a smoothie in her hands under the big cherry tree.*

After this exercise, explain the theory about communication (see Theory on communication).

Exercise 2: I-message

- 🌈 **Goal:** practice speaking with the I-message.
- 🌈 **Participants:** unlimited.
- 🌈 **Duration:** 10 – 15 min.
- 🌈 **Tools:** none.
- 🌈 **Method:** A you-message says: You do something wrong. An I-message says: I would like to see you do something different. An I-message invites the other to understand your side of the matter.

Exercise: Convert following you-messages into I-messages.

- You made a mess!
- What a noise! Put the music down!
- You're always very mysterious.
- You never do what I ask you to do.
- You need to shut up now.
- You talk too loud.
- You don't say how you're doing.
- You always start to talk about something else.
- Can you please stop smoking, everything stinks.



Exercise 3: Describe a drawing

- 🌈 **Goal:** emphasize importance of mutual and non-verbal communication.
- 🌈 **Participants:** groups of 3.
- 🌈 **Duration:** 10 – 20 min.
- 🌈 **Tools:** 1 drawing, 1 empty page, pencil.
- 🌈 **Method:** You work in little groups of 3. Two parents sit on a chair with their backs to each other (turned away from each other), the third parent stands/sits with them and observes. Parent 1 has a drawing in front of him and has to describe it to parent 2. Parent 2 tries to copy the drawing as well as possible, just with the description he gets from parent 1 (he/she doesn't see the original). Parent 1 can't say to the other what item to draw. Parent 3 observes how it goes. When it's finished, the drawings will be compared to each other.

In a second phase, 2 other persons can do the same exercise but parent 2 can ask questions.

In the end you can let the persons sit towards each other so we notice non-verbal communication is important too.

Exercise 4: Role-play

- 🌈 **Goal:** Teaching tips to communicate in difficult situation.
- 🌈 **Participants:** unlimited.
- 🌈 **Duration:** 15 – 20 min.
- 🌈 **Tools:** card with tips (see Materials 8: Tips role-play), cases.
- 🌈 **Method:** Work in groups of 3. Two people do the role-play, the third person observes. First you try to perform the situation without any tips. Afterwards two other people with the tips from the materials. Finally, you discuss how it went. Teachers can also easily practice by taking on their parent role or by converting the cases to situations in class.
 - What were the differences?
 - What was difficult?
 - What did you notice between the different situations?
 - Could you apply this at home?


Ps. The tips in the cards are also useful for kids.


Cases


- 🌈 **Refuse:** your son/daughter wants to go to the park with friends in a school




week. They haven't made their homework and the agreement says they can't go out too late during a school week. > you also can use your own house rules.


 **React on a refusal:** You ask your son/daughter to help you with house-keeping/to do their homework/... but they don't want to. They refuse.


 **Criticize:** Your son/daughter isn't doing well at school. They are absent often and are rude to the teachers. Your son/daughter is too influenceable by his/her friends.

 **Receive criticism:** Your son/daughter says you are a control freak and other parents have better rules than you.


Exercise 5: Keep asking questions

 **Goal:** learn to ask open and neutral questions and pay attention to body language.

 **Participants:** unlimited > work in pairs or groups of 3.

 **Duration:** 10 – 20 min.

 **Tools:** room with chairs.

 **Method:** Make pairs (A, B) and explain they're going to do a game 'Keep asking questions'. Player A chooses a topic where he/she knows a lot about. B asks an open question to A and A answers

the question. After receiving an answer from A, B asks a follow-up question, and so on. When all the players understand the different roles, you explain the rules and the game can begin. Note: Normally there is nothing wrong with closed questions, but they are just not allowed in the game.

Rules of the game:

- Your questions need to be open.
- Your questions need to follow-up what the other has told you; if you start a new topic, you're out.
- You can't think longer than 5 seconds.
- Every time it goes well, you get a point (write your points down!).
- Closed question or a silence that takes too long? Switch roles!

After 5 minutes you check who has achieved the most points in a row, so in 1 turn (every turn you start with 0 points). Do some people want to try again? Ask the best players to share their tactics with the group, make new pairs and do another round.

Variant:

Make groups of 3 and appoint a 'referee'. The others ask and answer. Wrong? Then everyone changes roles within the group.



Good open questions meet a number of requirements. They are:

- Neutral.
- As short as possible.
- With the right question-word (who, what, where, when, how).
- Invitingly (supported with body language).



MATERIALS 8: TIPS ROLE-PLAY

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Refuse</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I refuse or say 'no' clearly. - I am immediately saying that 'I' don't want something. - The refuse is specific, so I indicate what I refuse. - The refuse is decided and determined. - Make clear what you do want. - I don't use an excuse. - I don't need to defend myself because I refuse something. - I tune my non-verbal behaviour to my verbal behaviour. 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>React on a refuse</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Letting know I get why the other person refuses and why. - Expressing my feelings of disappointment. - Accepting that my request, and not me personally, is being rejected. - Being calm. - Ask about the desire of the other person and try to make a compromise without your parent role disappears. - You remain the parent. - Investigating how I can achieve my goal on a different way. If possible you search for a win for the other person. - Tuning my non-verbal behaviour to my verbal behaviour.
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Criticize</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I speak loud and clear I am dissatisfied with how someone speaks or acts. - I say immediately 'I' suffer from it. - I explain 'why' I think that behaviour is annoying. - I am to the point. - I am concrete and speak about a specific situation. - I possibly request to change in positive direction and I suggest the other some alternatives for his behaviour. - Making clear my criticism is about his/her behaviour and not about him/her personally. - I tune my non-verbal behaviour to my verbal behaviour. 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Receive criticism</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Giving the other person some space to give criticism. - Letting know I listened and I understand the behaviour the other persons tells me about. - I shortly say my opinion about the criticism. - I possibly express my feelings of disappointment. - I possibly ask the other person which alternatives he/she requests.



MODULE 6: COLOURED TRUTH

Module on racism and extremism





THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Radicalization and extremism. Two heavy terms that appear in the news almost every day. But how do we discuss these topics with our youths? Do we avoid them? Are we ignoring the questions young people have about this? Do we filter a great deal and tell half-truths? Of course not!

School and home are the main contexts where young people find themselves. These are places where they can be themselves, develop and be influenced. However, many teachers and parents do not feel secure (enough) to discuss complex and potentially emotional subjects like racism, religion, terror or radicalization in the classroom or at home. It is therefore important that we pay attention to this and make room to discuss these topics in class.

The more dialogue, the more contact with other ideas, the more connection with what is different, the more young people feel that they are understood and the less they feel the need to turn to hate preachers. Plus, the more knowledge young people acquire, the smaller the chance of radicalization.





Before you can start a conversation about it with young people, it is important to have enough knowledge on radicalization and extremism yourself. For example, when do we speak of radicalization and what is the difference with extremism? The most relevant terms are briefly explained below:

-  **Activism:** The pursuit of ideals in a way that does not conflict with the law and/or democratic ideas.
-  **Radicalization:** The process of re-searching, developing and adhering to a body of ideas and developing the acceptance/willingness to bring these ideas into reality through undemocratic actions.
-  **Extremism:** The pursuit of ideals or goals that transcend the boundaries of the democratic constitutional state, while engaging in illegal actions and activities. When a person or a group proceeds in carrying out illegal and/or violent activities to bring these ideas into reality, this is called extremism.
-  **Terrorism:** The most extreme expression of extremism in which terrorism legislation is violated. Terrorism is a



phenomenon in which specific targets are hit with the aim of spreading fear among the population and destabilizing (part of) a state.

From this follows that a(n):

-  **Activist** wants to change the world within the set legal boundaries and is open to compromise and nuance.
-  **Radical** wants to change the world and accept undemocratic activities to reach this goal.
-  **Extremist** wants to change the world (by force if necessary) and does not want to compromise and is not open for dialogue.
-  **Terrorist** wants to change the world and is prepared to use violence to innocents and fear to reach this goal.

The concepts of radicalization and extremism often refer to Islamist radicalization and extremism. However, neither radicalization nor extremism are linked to any particular ethnic, cultural or religious group. A distinction can be made between many different forms. To avoid exclusion and discrimination, this difference must also be made very clear. For a visual overview of the process of radicalization and the differences between, radicalism, extremism and terrorism, see Materials 9: Summary.

Online behaviour

The internet and social media play a key role in extremism and the process of radicalization. As responsible persons (parents/teachers) we have to make young people aware of this and teach them to be critical about the information they obtain via social media, current events, the internet, etc. Young people can easily access websites and internet forums hosting fake news and radical ideas. Online they can meet people who are looking for answers just like themselves. Also, youth can be approached by recruiters who profoundly influence them and sometimes even incite violent actions. An additional difficulty is that it is not easy to identify the sources of online information. Young people may think that they are consulting different sources when the information actually comes from the same sender.

Young people can engage in numerous activities online without being penalized or even without others being aware of it. It is often very difficult for the direct social environment to keep track of what youths are doing online. That does makes it more difficult to support and encourage them to take a critical look at the often unpolished and harsh messages spread on the internet. It is important that we make young people aware of these influences



and teach them to think critically about the information that they find online (see exercise 3).

Goals

- 🌈 Provide a number of skills and tips and tricks that should make it possible to discuss these topics at home or in the classroom.
- 🌈 Provide theoretical background so that parents and teachers feel strengthened in discussing these topics.
- 🌈 Increase (online) resilience of young people and make them aware of fake news.

Tips & Tricks

Discussing a topic such as radicalization or extremism within the classroom or at home might provoke a reaction. In addition to involvement and enthusiasm, you may also come across prejudices, comments or questions. Such discussions are not easy, but these reactions also provide a starting point for putting things in order. The following tips can provide guidance:

- 🌈 Take small steps. Choose one theme and try not to do everything at the same time.
- 🌈 Repeat. Developing awareness cannot be limited to a single conversation or

meeting. By making connections between current events, the involvement of young people is increased.

- 🌈 Prepare well. Read background information, explore the different perspectives. Determine your own point of view.
- 🌈 Ask what they already know and where they got this information from so you can already estimate the reliability of their sources. By calling on their knowledge and expertise you strengthen them to speak openly.
- 🌈 Search for answers together. It's okay not to know some things as a parent or teacher. Look it up together. First make sure they know the difference between an opinion and a fact. Young people can sometimes have a certain resistance to learning or accepting something from adults. Therefore it is preferable to let young people do as much as possible themselves and to let *them* discover and experience it with you. Current topics can provide a good angle to discuss these topics in various ways, for example media coverage, books, films or music. In this way you also teach them to consult the correct sources.
- 🌈 Dialogue ≠ debate. After sufficient research, give them the opportunity to



form their own opinion and express it. Then talk to each other in a respectful way.

- 🌍 “Them” and “us”. Talking about groups of people can quickly result in the use of the opposition 'we' and 'them' or 'right' and 'wrong'. This contradiction already indicates that a distinction is being made. Try to break through this by raising the issue of agreements. Emphasize common interests and goals. For example: Isn't it important for *all young people* to spend their school time in the best possible way? Doesn't *everyone* want to be treated decently and with respect?
- 🌍 Be careful with generalization. Nuance the perception of (groups of) people to avoid stereotypes and generalizations. Not all of Africa is starving. And just as Christianity has a great diversity, there is also a great diversity within Islam. People are individuals and thus are all different. Let these nuances emerge.
- 🌍 Cultures are dynamic. There is no typical Moroccan, Turkish, Belgian, (etc.) culture. Countries and peoples have countless (sub) cultures, each of which has its own rules. These rules are constantly changing due to new experiences and insights. That is why there can be no manual 'how to deal with ...'.


Intercultural communication mainly means: being flexible, open-minded and interested in each other.

- 🌍 Do not pretend to know everything. Young people themselves are the target audience and therefore also the experts in this field. It is important that the young person has the feeling that difficult subjects can be discussed.
- 🌍 Ignoring difficult questions is a bad strategy. Even if you think that the question will automatically be forgotten or you feel insecure about the subject, it is still important to pay attention to it.





EXERCISES


Exercise 1: Brainstorm

 **Goal:** start a discussion about radicalization.

 **Participants:** unlimited.

 **Duration:** 10 - 15 min.

 **Tools:** possibly large sheet of paper and marker


 **Method:** Write the word radicalization on a large piece of paper and ask what is being thought of with this word. First write down a few words and ask why this word was thought of. Then try to come to a definition together. Use the following keywords or words that mean the same.

- Process
- Criticism of -
- Affected by -
- Investigates whether showing interest in -
- Alternative to democratic society
- Convinced of own right / values
- Alienation from others
- Possibility of violence


If the word radicalization is too difficult (e.g. for young children) you can do this with the word democracy. First find an appropriate definition on which you can base yourself.


The whole exercise can be done verbally and/or in a family context too.


Exercise 2: Theses game

 **Goal:** enable teachers and parents to discuss topics with their children/students.

 **Participants:** unlimited.

 **Duration:** 10 - 15 min.

 **Tools:** statements and tips (see Materials 9: Theses).

 **Method:** Read a statement and ask what you should do in that situation.

Theses:

- I prefer (my child) to have friends from his own culture.
- It is best to discuss difficult topics such as racism, radicalization or terrorism.
- I (parent / teacher) am always right.
- Nuance is not important in a conversation with your child. Everything is just black or white. That is easier.
- I only need to discuss our own religion with the children.



Exercise 3: Fake news

- 🌍 **Goal:** to make young people aware of fake news and how to recognize it.
- 🌍 **Participants:** unlimited.
- 🌍 **Duration:** 10 - 15 min.
- 🌍 **Tools:** internet, screen (laptop, smart-board, etc.)
- 🌍 **Method:** First discuss with young people where they get their information on the internet. Discuss the reliability of this and especially what they think of it. Ask if they know the existence of fake news and if they have already been in contact with this. Then play the video and discuss this.

Videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xf8mjbVRqao>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Blv9054dBBI>

Exercise 4: Role play

- 🌍 **Goal:** practice on answering difficult questions.
- 🌍 **Participants:** unlimited (per 3).

- 🌍 **Duration:** 10 - 15 min.
- 🌍 **Tools:** 3 chairs, 2 test subjects and an observer, cases, sheet with tips.
- 🌍 **Method:** Person A is a parent and person B is a child. Person B asks a difficult question to person A. Person A tries to answer this as good as possible. Person B can ask a lot of questions and make it difficult for person A. The observer may offer help if the conversation gets stuck or if person A needs some tips. After 5 minutes the conversation is discussed and roles can be changed.

Possible questions:

- What does discrimination / racism / radicalization / etc. mean?
- Why do people carry out attacks?
- Which religion is right?
- Why do people have problems with my faith?
- What does the Bible / Quran / ... say about the other religions?
- Come up with questions that match your own world.

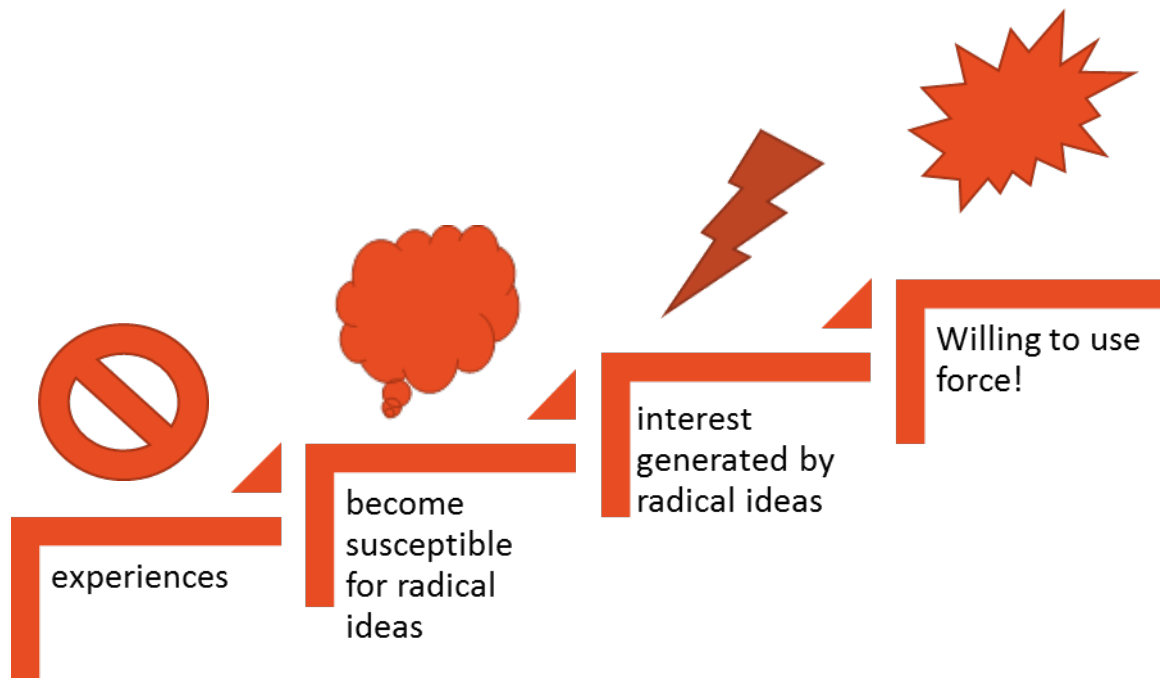


MATERIALS 9: SUMMARY

Activism	Radicalism	Extremism	Terrorism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Activist - Legal - Pursuing ideals in a lawful, democratic way - Our way is the right way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Radical - Legal - Pursuing ideals while accepting undemocratic ways to reach them - Our way is the only way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extremist - Illegal - Pursuing ideals while engaging in undemocratic ways to reach them - We'll force you to follow our way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Terrorist - Illegal - Pursuing ideals while engaging in extreme violence and employing (public) fear - If you don't follow our way, we'll kill you
Examples			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greenpeace - Anti-migration protestors - Anti-abortion protestors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Squatters movement - Breitbart - Salafism, Orthodoxy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Antifa - Facism/Neonazism/Alt-right - Jewish settlers (Gaza) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - IRA - Anders Breivik/Brenton Tarrant - ISIS/Al-Qaeda



Process of radicalization





MATERIALS 9: THESES AND RESPONSES

I prefer (my child) to have friends from his own culture.

- 🌍 Friendships with someone from a different culture is a positive thing.
- 🌍 They reduce talking about "we" and "they".
- 🌍 You become "richer".
- 🌍 You learn from each other and about each other.
- 🌍 Encourage contact between different groups.
- 🌍 E.g. neighborhood parties, spring cleaning, etc.

It is best to discuss difficult topics such as racism / radicalization / terrorism.

- 🌍 Talk about difficult subjects.
- 🌍 Teach your child that "the perfect society" does not exist. Also tell your child about your own experiences, in relevance to current events.
- 🌍 Search actively for information.
- 🌍 DO: Counteract prejudice with arguments and humor, address origin and culture positively.
- 🌍 DON'T: "They are all racists" or "We will never be part of it" or "They are always the same".

I (parent / teacher) am always right.

TALK

- 🌍 Let your child talk about everything, even if you do not approve everything.
- 🌍 Talk about making mistakes.
- 🌍 Talk about dealing with differences.

BE OPEN

- 🌍 Listen to what is on your child's mind.
- 🌍 Encourage your child to tell as much as possible at home.
- 🌍 Give your child the opportunity to find an answer to what is right / wrong.
- 🌍 Help build solutions



Nuance is not important in a conversation with your child. Everything is just black or white. That is easier.

- 🌍 An adolescent is looking for answers, but might not always "accepts" answers from parents.
- 🌍 It is better for parents to look for answers *together with* their child.
- 🌍 Talk as openly as possible; do not exclude answers.
- 🌍 Give as few black and white answers as possible. Few things are completely good or completely bad.
- 🌍 It is especially important that your child learns that there are many different opinions.
- 🌍 Always have good arguments. If you don't have them, look for someone who does.
- 🌍 'Just because', is *not* an acceptable answer.
- 🌍 Dare to change your mind!
- 🌍 An opinion is not the same as a rule.

I only need to discuss our own religion with the kids.

- 🌍 Look at religion in an open way.
- 🌍 Try to see the "big picture" in and between religions.
- 🌍 So you can see where different religions match.
- 🌍 Knowing other religions provides more knowledge & understanding.
- 🌍 You also learn what is under discussion & why.
- 🌍 Make a "translation" from religion to society, from "then" to "now".
- 🌍 Talk to your child about his / her place in society.



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Toolkit: At home at school

The situations at home and at school are significantly influencing the social development of children between 10-14. Therefore it is important to build bridges between these two environments and bring teachers, parents and their students/children together. The modular Toolkit: At Home at school offers a variety of exercises on the themes **Inclusion and diversity, Group pressure, Conflict resolution, Communication and Racism and extremism.**

The exercises allow teachers and parents to feel confident about their role in discussing these important topics with their students or children. Additionally, the toolkit commences with a module for teachers and parents on getting familiar with each other and building mutual trust and respect.

All together this toolkit allows schools to become safe learning and developing environments for their students. And by including the parents, these environments continue to be present after the final school bell rings.



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