



Erasmus+ project “Extending Social Educators Competences” ESEC
Project Nr. **2018-1-PL01-KA204-051126**

HANDBOOK: The project course of Parenting Science: Communication with Parents

Rēzekne Academy of Technologies

Summary of the classes.

The classes “*Communication with parents*” cover the most topical issues of Parenting Science with a focus on communication. The items are chosen for discussions according to the parent most attended questions of parent integrated roles, communication among parents and children, peculiarities of communication in digital age; these are contextualized with the current social processes and needs. Articles and clips are suggested to consider and discuss. The course consists of suggested and optional activities, as well as tests for parent self-evaluation of their communication skills, conflict solvation, and reflections on the content of the course. Wide literature suggested for parents’ choice, local country issues are welcome.

I. Outline of the program

The aim of the classes: to offer parents an opportunity to improve their understanding and skills of parenting; obtain deeper knowledge in Parenting Science and practice; further develop their communicative skills and accents on cooperation, as well as improve self-evaluation experience.

The content

1. Parenting Science and parents’ roles, the main content of parenting science and essentialities of practices; adult learning features, their self-evaluation - 4 + 4
2. The essence and benefits of cooperation; role of cooperation in adult learning and parenting; cooperation in child rearing and family upbringing - 4 + 4
3. The essence of communication, its relation to successful cooperation; role of communication in children and adult learning; communication as a core of parenting; self-evaluation of communication practices - 4 + 4
4. Self-evaluation and evaluation of parenting skills – a starting point of the further target-setting; principles of a productive and successful self-evaluation - 3 + 3
5. Evaluation of the outcomes - 2

Allocated hours, total – 32 hours (3 credit points):

Autonomous learning – 16 hours

Face-to-face or Skype classes – 16 hours

Course participants will learn or improve their skills and competence (the themes of the program are mutually integrated by the design of classes):



Erasmus+ project “Extending Social Educators Competences” ESEC
Project Nr. **2018-1-PL01-KA204-051126**

- Parents’ roles and adult learning features
- Role of cooperation in adult learning and parenting
- Role of communication in adult learning and parenting
- The basis of the parenting science
- Self-evaluation and evaluation of competencies

Outcomes of the classes ‘Communication with Parents’:

- Course participants will acquire new knowledge in ‘Parenting Science’;
- Further develop their skills to communicate with children;
- Learn how to identify the core problems and specificity of the children in digital age;
- Obtain the basic skills of self-evaluation.

Optional questions for evaluation of the classes (SWID analysis) and self-evaluation (table)

1. Why and how ‘Parenting Science’ is useful for parents?

2. What did you learn from it?

3. Why is communication suggested as a core of this program?

4. Please, comment:

- (a) ‘If there are no common activities, there is no communication’;
- (b) Misunderstanding, disagreements, and even conflicts between parents and their children are a standing phenomenon through ages. Why? What do their experiences say?

5. Choose one, read and comment:

- (a) *Alone together: how mobile devices have changed family time*. Available at: <https://theconversation.com/alone-together-how-mobile-devices-have-changed-family-time-111478>
- (b) Molla, R. (2019). *Generation Z doesn’t always want to hear from you*. Available at: <https://www.vox.com/recode/2019/10/15/20915352/generation-z-technology-attitudes-optimism-always-reachable-survey-gfk>
- (c) Give your comments of how to translate these suggestions (tips) into the categories of *Parenting Science* and Practice: Uzialko, A. (2019). *Self-Assessment: 5 Tips for Writing Your Performance Evaluation*. Available at: <https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/5379-writing-self-assessment.html>

6. What parent and parent educator features demonstrate the adult learner skills?

7. What are the core features of communication with the children of digital age?

8. Why cooperation with children is fruitful?

Erasmus+ project “Extending Social Educators Competences” ESEC
Project Nr. **2018-1-PL01-KA204-051126**

9. Please, comment how you integrate your parenting roles and why you are successful (or why not)?

Literature:

Abraham, H. (2017). A Family Is What You Make It? Legal Recognition and Regulation of Multiple Parents. *American University Journal of Gender, Social Policy & the Law*, 25(4). Available at: https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2925886

Alone together: how mobile devices have changed family time. Available at: <https://theconversation.com/alone-together-how-mobile-devices-have-changed-family-time-111478>

Child Fareway Information Gateway (2019). *Parent Education Program*. Available at: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/prevention-programs/parented/>

Cole, L. (2019). *The Importance of Education and the Role of Family in Education*. Available at: <https://www.mentalup.co/blog/importance-of-education-and-role-of-family-in-education>

Eurochild: *Family and Parenting Support*. Available at: <https://www.eurochild.org/policy/family-and-parenting-support/>

European Parents' Association (2018). *Parents and the European Education Area*. Available at: <https://euparents.eu/parents-european-education-area/>

Journal Parenting: Theory and Practice. Taylor and Francis on-line. Available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/hpar20/current>

Mastroianni, B. (2016). *How Generation Z is changing the tech world*. CBS Interactive Inc. All Rights Reserved. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/social-media-fuels-a-change-in-generations-with-the-rise-of-gen-z/>

Molla, R. (2019). *Generation Z doesn't always want to hear from you*. <https://www.vox.com/recode/2019/10/15/20915352/generation-z-technology-attitudes-optimism-always-reachable-survey-gfk>

Parkavi, R. (2018). Mobile Devices in the Classroom In: *Handbook of Research on Mobile Devices and Smart Gadgets in K-12 Education* DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-2706-0.ch012

Thomson Reuters. (2014). *The World in 2025: 10 Predictions of Innovation*. Available at: http://www.infocomanalysis.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/World-025_thomsonreuters2025.pdf

Uzialko, A. (2019). *Self-Assessment: 5 Tips for Writing Your Performance Evaluation*. Available at: <https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/5379-writing-self-assessment.html>

Relevant sources published in your country

II. A design of interactive classes

Parenting Science develops not only because of the large variety of education possibilities and

Erasmus+ project “Extending Social Educators Competences” ESEC
Project Nr. **2018-1-PL01-KA204-051126**

NGO that assist parents. The perceptions and conceptions change due to the diversity of cultures living side-by-side in the countries; this also because of the expanded knowledge on parenting and a shift in mindset that cause the need to replace the concept of parent authority, child obedience, and authoritarian style of child-rearing and communication in families – this is being replaced by the more complex concept of *positive parenting*: parental responsibility, respect to the needs of each family member, mutual protection of everyone’s rights, fostering the child rights and skills of critical thinking, self-expression, or responsible autonomy.

The content and its implementation are organized into three mutually integrated parts of activities; these three parts are:

- (1) activities that initiate communication - participants communicate with their peers, discuss, share views, agree, disagree, etc. – this makes a reason to communicate, covers the functions of warm-up, and starts integrating the content;
- (2) activities that are directed to evaluate and improve communication skills – these make use of part (a) to have an evidence-based discussion on communication and skill improvement;
- (3) activities that develop skills of an active listener – this belongs to a successful communication and improves parent and parent educator competencies; unfortunately, this part usually is missing in traditional programs.

Part 1. Initiating communication

Activity 1-1. The dominating family needs in the European context

Adult and parent education need in the EU – why and what parents need to know and be able to achieve in their children upbringing? The social context:

- post-industrial changes and digital technologies – the new generation lives among and with digital technologies;
- too much time spent in communications via mobile devices and too few for live communication;
- enormous speed of changes in technologies and technological devices;
- responsibilities of families change in the uncertain social world and new way of their children thinking;
- youth employment becomes a problem related to appropriate education and their will to work;
- demonstrated will of youth’s independence and self-confidence coupled with comparatively poor life experience.

Please, work in groups and make a list of the dominating needs (5 min.):

1.The dominating family needs (from your experience, impact of the digital age, etc.)	2.Parents’ learning possibilities, making use of these (to be filled in during the session)	3.What the course of <i>Parenting Science</i> can provide more (to be filled in by the end of the session)
Knowledge: Skills: Attitudes:		

When the list is ready – this will serve you as a starting stage in your discussions on parenting –



Erasmus+ project “Extending Social Educators Competences” ESEC
Project Nr. **2018-1-PL01-KA204-051126**

please, discuss it in small groups or at a plenary session and select some 3-4 for more detailed discussion:

- Why do you consider the selected needs dominating?
- Where is the main problem?
- Agree upon one need (these can be more if you can allocate more time for discussions) that is the most common for families that are represented in the group.

Activity 1-2. Positive parenting - discussion

Reading of small chapters of articles which the participants chose before the sessions and suggested for discussion: read, comment, views, other participant experiences, conclusions (suggested for discussion: Rodrigo, M.H., Almeida, A., Spiel, Ch., and Koops, W. (2012). Introduction: Evidence-based parent education programmes to promote positive parenting. *European Journal of Developmental Psychology*, 2012, 9 (1), 2–10); the following statement and a question had been suggested:

- (a) the full implementation of the Council of Europe Recommendation on positive parenting requires an appropriate response to these challenges – what the challenges and achievements could be?
- (b) What do you understand by notion *positive parenting*?

Activity 1-3. Communication in solving topical parenting problems

Parenting (child rearing) is a process of promoting and supporting the physical, intellectual, emotional, and social development of a child from infancy to adulthood. Parenting refers to a raising of a child in balanced and coordinated relationship of biological and social development (Abraham, 2017).

Make a list of problems you want to solve and means that you have for it.

What do we want to solve?	What do we know about the need/problem?
What tools/means/methods do we have?	What do we need to learn, understand, and do?

When the table is ready, discuss it in small groups or plenary session (if there are few participants). Spot out common needs for the majority of the participants; discuss why? What are the reasons? What knowledge, understanding, and communication skills do you have or lack to cope with the needs that you experience?

Activity 1-4. Perception in communication

What can you judge of this family: For the session two pictures had been used:



Erasmus+ project “Extending Social Educators Competences” ESEC
Project Nr. **2018-1-PL01-KA204-051126**

- (a) Initiate a discussion on what the participants noticed and how their perception influences their reaction and communication in general. The participants imagine their possible reaction and comment the picture (below) from: <http://theconversation.com/alone-together-how-mobile-devices-have-changed-family-time-111478>;
- (b) Which apps do your children use? Should you know all possible apps or you can rely on your children choice? Do you talk of these possibilities with your children? The picture from: <https://www.pinterest.com/mashable/the-best-apps/>) The picture of apps to self-check the course participants or children recognition; also, to comment their possible usage by exchanging views of the participants, identifying those used by the participants’ children, as well as discussion of how these could be introduced to parents and used when assisting them.

Use the pictures below to discuss the chosen hints. You can choose more relevant pictures from the web.

Some hints on the ways of acquiring competencies:

- Involvement in activities, cooperation with school and children
- Communication – value sharing, mind-set development
- The most effective way to do it is learning every-time, any-where
- Learning together with peers, teachers, parents, and others
- Parents’ learning from their children and children’s learning from their parents
- Discuss the family members’ achievements of each day, just devote some minutes to this to strengthen mutual understanding
- what can you judge about mutual relations in this family; what can you ‘ read behind’ the picture?

What can parents do in favour of their children and young generation?

What are the parents’ roles? Do they change in the age of technologies?

Mind: there is a noticed tendency – as soon as parents or teachers join an app child use to change for another app.

Do you know what APPs your children use? Use the picture *Alphabet of APPs* (below). More pictures are available at: <https://www.pinterest.com/mashable/the-best-apps/>

Do you know how, when, with whom your children communicate in the web?

You can choose for the discussion:

- The most popular free applications
- The most popular iPhone apps –what is on the screen of your child’s iPhone?

Activity 1-5. Non-verbal communication

Using nonverbal means is a powerful communication skill. Ask participants to describe a situation when either the speaker or the listener used nonverbals like facial expression, body postures and actions, body space boundaries, eye contact either appropriate or addressed to something else, and why these means are important in knowing if someone is listening.

Erasmus+ project “Extending Social Educators Competences” ESEC
Project Nr. **2018-1-PL01-KA204-051126**

Discuss in groups/plenary session the term *appropriate eye contact*. What can you ‘read’ in other’s eyes?

Suggested pictures for Activity 4.



The picture from the blog: *Alone together: how mobile devices have changed family time* Available at: <http://theconversation.com/alone-together-how-mobile-devices-have-changed-family-time-111478>

Erasmus+ project “Extending Social Educators Competences” ESEC
Project Nr. 2018-1-PL01-KA204-051126



The picture from: <https://www.pinterest.com/mashable/the-best-apps/>)



Erasmus+ project “Extending Social Educators Competences” ESEC
Project Nr. **2018-1-PL01-KA204-051126**

Part 2. Improving communication skills

Activity 2-1. Self-evaluation.

The activity starts with self-evaluation (Table 1 is given by the program below - *Questionnaire: Interpersonal Communication*) – participants evaluate their communication skills, make conclusions, and then discuss in the group:

- the most advanced and those that need improvements. The educator suggests to group the two kinds of skills (well-developed and under-developed), usually these are the same in major.
- Then the discussion goes on by identifying the reasons; these are also grouped into traditional and normative (parent-centered) education and the child- or learner- learning centred.

Conclusions on Table 1.

Activity 2-2. Styles of communication

Suggest to comment on two styles of adult communication in a family; use the self-assessment table to make conclusions on well-developed or under-developed communication skills:

- When you are at home you never pay attention to me/ as if you do not notice I am at home. You return home every evening and go straight to the TV/computer/iPhone. You seem to care more about the news in the world than what is happening in our family/with our children.
- I feel like we are not paying attention to each other/children/domestic affairs when we both return home from work. I wonder if your family/me/children are less attractive than the events in the world. Would you like to share the news of the day/ what was the day like for both of us/children? I think we are not connecting very well to discuss our family affairs/we should contact closer to discuss....

Activity 2-3. The most topical problems in families are communication-related

What are the most topical problems of your children, what they want to be, to have, and avoid?
What we want to achieve by solving a topical problem?

Spot out topical problems in families and why do these exist

What is the problem we want to solve?	What are/is our children/child problem that they want to solve?
---------------------------------------	---

Erasmus+ project “Extending Social Educators Competences” ESEC
Project Nr. **2018-1-PL01-KA204-051126**

What do we know about our children’s problems?	What do your children tell you about their problems?
Spot out the most topical of your children’s problem	Initiate a discussion with the child/children

Discuss these in small groups then in plenary session: Communication-related problems in families.

You will see that you and your children want to be successful, recognized, accepted in peer and/or adult community (family), need more communication, arrive to the mutual understanding among their family members. Actually, your needs are common, the tools, ways, means of achieving might be different (because of different experiences).

Now it is time to discuss the problems with your children/youth deeper, in details, and make it a regular affair in families. It will take some time, actually discussions should be non-stop, and these should be a normal topic among constant communication in your families. This is what your children need first of all; this is where your children learn life.

If you can allocate more time for your group discussions you can exchange experiences and spot out what you do often or do not do at all.

Activity 2-4. Your family target skills

Skills are the expertise or talent needed in order to do a job or task: practical jobs, learning, drawing, swimming, communicate, cooperate, etc. These allow a person for doing particular job at a respective level of quality and achieve the desired success. Skills make a person confident and independent in life. Almost any skill can be learned or improved if they are set realistic.

2020 growing/emerging mixed skills – (not every skill for everyone). Introduction by The World Economic Forum, 2019, on the most required jobs and competencies in the nearest forthcoming years.

(a) Work in groups and distinguish between hard and soft skills:

Analytical thinking and innovation vs. knowledge

Active learning and learning strategies vs. passive knowledge

Creativity, originality and initiative - by problem-solving

Technology design and programming - active technologies’ user

Critical thinking and analysis - view-point for discussions, ideas, arguments

Complex problem-solving - context vision

Erasmus+ project “Extending Social Educators Competences” ESEC
Project Nr. **2018-1-PL01-KA204-051126**

Leadership and social influence - manage a particular areas of activities, self-management
Emotional intelligence - clear shared attitudes, responsibility, reciprocity
Reasoning, problem-solving, idea-producing - target-oriented activities, process management

- (b) Use the list of the most topical skills by The World Economic Forum, 2019. Range the skills according to: (a) priorities in your family, (b) priorities of your children, or (c) planned to acquire in the nearest future by your children or... (you may choose the most topical criteria for skills/competence analysis).

Additional activity. Systems analysis and evaluation – self-evaluation, target-settings

Self-assessment is an activity of collecting evidences to evaluate one’s knowledge, skills, abilities, attitude, and other qualities. Self-assessments may also have a strong effect on how people are perceived within the family. This includes a look back over the quality of accomplishments and demonstration of communication and cooperation; they reflect mutual relations in families. Self-evaluation is a background for target-setting.

Compare parent and children skills. You can draw one more table to analyse what skills/at least some bases of these each of your children or your have acquired and demonstrate them in learning and everyday activities, what skills are still unknown to you and your children. You will notice that, say, digital skills might be better developed by your children (age or other individual differences might interfere).

You can also self-evaluate your knowledge and skills.

Activity 2-5. Evaluation of hard and soft skills

Discussion:

Why soft skills (human qualities) become as important as the hard (pragmatic, technical) ones?

Select an item from the suggested above or choose your own and create one more table: Values and individual qualities in your family

What values do our children/youth share among their peers?	What values that they share follow those of our generation?
Which of these can you accept and which not? The main answer will be to the question ‘why’?	Find reasonable arguments to the question: why your children’s values correspond to yours and why not?

Suggest to complete this table: (a) by parents and (b) by children. Then do a small comparative study: dominating values of children compared to those of parents. Isn’t this a nice reason for dis-



Erasmus+ project “Extending Social Educators Competences” ESEC
Project Nr. **2018-1-PL01-KA204-051126**

cussions? Can we judge of dissonance in values? What can we say of communication, misunderstanding, and reasons of conflicts in families? Comment: children often complain that parents do not understand them – what could it mean?

Now you can discuss in small groups or at plenary session, why children or youth challenge human qualities alongside with the practical skills; how is digital competence valued, etc. – you can choose the most appropriate focus.

Activity 2-6. Discussion on parent roles

Participants should be able to

- identify the various aspects of parent roles
- agree upon a set of the generic role aspects of parenting
- reflect upon conceptualisations of parenting from a European perspective (use experiences of the participant countries in this seminar/program)

By developing a critical awareness through discussions of the various aspects of the parent roles, participants will be encouraged to adopt a differentiated approach in endeavouring to respond to the individual needs of parents and adult learners at various stages of their professional development.

Discuss if and how parent roles are related to values and communication style in families

Need analysis to meet the parents' roles and features of adult learners

1. With reference to your own experience, consider the following roles.

2. Then identify those **five roles** you consider to be the most important aspects in parenting and place them in rank order. **Comment your choice**

When selecting each role, please, register the questions which you put forward here:

3. Discard any roles you deem of little importance or irrelevant and add any roles that you consider essential, but have not been cited on the cards. Please give reasons for your choices.

4. Share your thoughts with the members in your group and agree a list of parent roles, which you consider to be ‘essential’ or ‘less important’. Add any roles that were not included in the original list on the blank cards provided.

5. In the plenary, **share your group's decisions** with all participants.

Suggested list of parent roles (you can add more roles):

Adviser	manager	initiator
Coach	care-taker	partner
Assistant	enabler	evaluator
Guide	leader	listener
Mediator	instructor	model
Protector	supporter	facilitator



Erasmus+ project “Extending Social Educators Competences” ESEC
Project Nr. **2018-1-PL01-KA204-051126**

Select to your opinion the most important parents’ roles and spot out possible ways to integrate these. If you choose it an individual activity discuss your individual vision with the other participants of this program. You will see much in common. Now you can exchange opinion how parents can integrate their roles in everyday family life.

Activity 2-7. Adult learners - parents as learners

The best learning is learning together with your children – make it a joint venture! What can you children teach you?

Please, find below some most important features of adult learners. Read them and discuss in groups:
-What you have to master for parenting to improve your family upbringing or family pedagogy?
- If you are a teacher or educator to deliver the Parenting science program for parents, what you have to take into consideration when preparing and delivering classes for parents (they are adult learners).

Discuss in groups what you should spot out as the dominating features – these might be specific and differ between the two above mentioned target groups.

Discuss the ways you can meet the adult learners’ features

Each group takes one cluster (or more if you can allocate time for this):

1. Adults have a need to know why they need to learn something before they undertake learning it. They look for the practicality of content. Traditionally adult learners tend to take courses without questioning why the course is important to their education. Usually they do not choose unnecessary courses.
2. Adults have a need to be responsible for their own decisions and to be treated as capable of self-direction. (School learners, on the other hand, often have a need for direction to be provided by teachers.
3. Adult learners have a variety of life experiences which are their richest resources for learning. This is in contrast to traditional learners who rely heavily on the teacher’s knowledge. Why parents often experience problems with their children? What are the dominating problems?
4. Adults are motivated to learn things that they perceive will help them cope with real-life tasks or problems. They are also motivated by a sense of self-esteem. Traditionally school learners are more subject-oriented and they seek to successfully complete courses regardless of how the content is related to their own goals.

Activity 2-8. Cooperation: perceiving – understanding – doing

Cooperation is the process undertaken by two or more people of working, learning, creating



Erasmus+ project “Extending Social Educators Competences” ESEC
Project Nr. **2018-1-PL01-KA204-051126**

something, organizing one’s life together to complete a task or achieve a goal. The value of cooperation/collaboration is achieving better results by putting experiences together; this often creates synergy, that is impossible while working alone.

1. **Video on attention and perception** (you can choose other clips that you find relevant).

Find in the web:

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/06/why-people-with-creative-personalities-see-the-world-differently>

1. Please, pay attention to the instruction of the video.
2. After watching the video, please, speak out what you have noticed/perceived
3. If you have to make a decision, what is your perception (how many cases did you notice to base on for your decision?)
4. What else did you notice to make your conclusion?

Your conclusion on the video and decision-making: Your ideas for cooperation with the group?
What activities can you initiate with the group?

Compare the components and discuss differences and common features of Cooperation and Collaboration

(You can enter the web-site and test your collaboration skill. Test: English: Online Collaboration Skills Barometer <http://dev.ecdl.lt/project/online4edu/index.php?lang=en>)

Synergy – additional possibility which is not available when working individually; the importance of this phenomenon lies in possibilities to create new knowledge.

Discussion: what you consider to be the most important components of collaboration at the conceptual level? What components should be improved?

- Awareness – We become part of a working entity with a shared purpose
- Motivation – We drive to gain consensus in problem solving or development
- Self-synchronization – We decide as individuals when things need to happen
- Participation – We participate in collaboration and we expect others to participate
- Mediation – We negotiate and we collaborate together and find a middle point
- Reciprocity – We share and we expect sharing in return through reciprocity
- Reflection – We think and we consider alternatives
- Engagement – We proactively engage rather than wait and see

Activity 2-9. Values of communication.

Now we have collected situations, views, experiences; communication helped us with this. What is communication, why it is so important?

Erasmus+ project “Extending Social Educators Competences” ESEC
Project Nr. **2018-1-PL01-KA204-051126**

Make a list of communication values and discuss it in small groups or at plenary session

Mind a methodological statement: *communication and different kinds of action are two interrelated phenomena that make a background for human individual development and enhancement.*

Communication is an act of transferring information from one person or group to another. *Quite often communication reaches the form of discussion – exchange of knowledge, views, opinions, or values.*

Additional/extra activity. Strategies for effective/positive parenting

Avoiding children and adult behaviour problems, avoiding physical or/and mental violence/misbehaviour.

Table 2. Some hints for a program for parenting skills’ enhancement

Reasons	Some hints for the possible program
<p>Children and even adults feel <i>frustrated by a problem that's too big for them.</i></p> <p>They <i>haven't yet learned how to control their impulses</i>, or avoiding conflicts in socially acceptable ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - kids don't process emotions and information the way adults do; - hostile attributions keep hot the very problem they want to solve or even create new ones 	<p>Assistance in developing experience of reasonable behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss the problem to spot out reasons (aims and desires; means or tools chosen to solve the problem; finding common desires and negotiating on differences - Discuss possible solutions, let children, /adults themselves make a decision
<p><i>Special difficulties</i> - like stressful life events, emotional regulation problems, attention deficits, autistic symptoms, o quite often - hyperactivity</p>	<p>Theories and practice of special pedagogy</p>
<p>Behaviour depends on <i>how people perceive the world</i></p> <p><i>it is shaped by the social environment</i></p>	<p>Family <i>culture</i> and its cultural contexts</p> <p>Behaviour, parents as <i>behaviour models</i></p> <p>Discussion on events, literature, theatre, etc. in families – <i>creating emotional culture and values</i></p>

Erasmus+ project “Extending Social Educators Competences” ESEC
 Project Nr. **2018-1-PL01-KA204-051126**

and <i>how people evaluate</i> the influences of the world agents (according to individual meaningful <i>criteria</i>)	
Family members <i>can have a powerful influence</i>	<i>Moral support</i> and <i>practical training</i> of socially acceptable behaviour - developing experiences

An extra activity: *Some pedagogical hints to solve conflicts*

Do not...	Do... / parents need assistance:
Do not address <i>the whole person</i> – this destroys chances to change (like: you are a bad child); people might perceive a situation differently	Address his/her behaviour (like: this reaction / behaviour is not the best way you can do it... Just think of it)
Do not make <i>immediate</i> decisions and evaluations – people (especially children) might need more time to process verbal instructions, require more practice	First try to understand the reasons, come to realistic expectations (this might take time for considerations); re-shaping demands
Do not lose a focus on feeling protected in family - emotionally dis-balanced people and kids are less likely to learn on their own	Get realistic expectations about the development of empathy, kindness, attitudes, relations; Support their <i>sense</i> of being protected
Do not lose focus on maintaining a <i>positive relationship</i> ; ... do not keep listing misbehaviours	The first step is <i>reorganizing one's priorities</i>
Do not sacrifice one's own emotional well-being, do not complain about bad relations, misbehaviour etc. Stress shades thinking and damages relationships	Learn how to manage stress, how to maintain good relationships

Let us self-evaluate our communication skills. Why communication is important?

Optional Activity

Let us design a course/classes „Parenting Science: Positive parenting “:

- (a) for parents if you are teachers/mentors/educators;
- (b) for your personal development if you are parents and want to go deeper into Parenting Science.

- 1.The aim: to assist parents (adult learners) in developing parent and children engagement skills, provide parents opportunities for acquiring the basis of the *Parenting Science* to enable them self-conduct the improvements of their parents' competence.
- 2.The achievements: knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, ... experiences etc. – the *focus of the program*. Will you, please, reflect on what you have learned during this session?

Erasmus+ project “Extending Social Educators Competences” ESEC
Project Nr. **2018-1-PL01-KA204-051126**

3. The content – items/components of *Parenting Science* which the program covers to offer the parents a possibility to gain the planned achievements:

- Knowledge and understanding of their children (psychology, anatomy, health, caring...): cognitive abilities, emotional balance etc.
- Educational possibilities and functions of a family: *role models, engagement, communication, cooperation, sharing partnership and values*
- **Cooperation and communication** – basis of family engagement; **why** it matters to the success of children and schools
- Exploring the impact of **family engagement** to better educational outcomes and learner developmental success
- **Exploring effective** parental practices
- Helping parents to achieve understanding of the most often reasons and preferable **responses to children misbehaviour**
- **Special needs...**

Engagement is essential for kindergarten, school, college, as well as family upbringing improvements. It is also increasingly recognized as an integral element for proficient practice as an educator.

4. Tools, technologies you will suggest:

5. **Self-evaluation** and evaluation of the program outcomes

Suggested table for self-evaluation

Table 1. Questionnaire: *Interpersonal Communication*

The following confident statements have the aim to help parents (also teachers and/or educators) to conduct effective communication by reflexing about **skills for interpersonal communication**. The questionnaire can be used either for regular classes or for final self-evaluation. For a current session in the Parenting science program we accentuate communication (choose the most appropriate partner of communication and self-evaluate accordingly) or chose as many as you like – this then will take more time to complete:

- a) with children
- b) with colleagues
- c) with acquaintances
- d) with other parents
- e) with...

Not Confi dent 1	2	3	4	Very Confi dent 5
---------------------------	---	---	---	----------------------------

Erasmus+ project “Extending Social Educators Competences” ESEC
Project Nr. **2018-1-PL01-KA204-051126**

1. I understand the importance of interpersonal communication with ...					
2. I understand that the communication process depends on many factors					
3. I know that I can manage some of these factors (mention them)					
4. I know that some other of these factors do not depend on me or on what I want (<i>mention them</i>)					
5. I understand that my whole behaviour is involved in communication, verbal and non-verbal signs					
6. I know that for an effective communication the verbal signs I use must be clear					
7. I know that non-verbal signs, body language (facial expressions, gestures) are sometimes more significant for communication than language itself.					
8. I am aware that, if verbal signs and non-verbal signs do not coincide, the communication partner(s) will be confused (<i>please, think of a situation for a group discussion</i>)					
9. I understand that the way I perceive reality differs from that of my children (other persons)					
10. I know that the way I perceive reality is a result of my socialization					
11. I know that I perceive reality through a “filter” consisting of my experiences, my thoughts, my values (<i>think of cases to be discussed</i>)					
12. I know that the same ‘filter’ applies for children (any other person) involved in communication					
13. I understand that I have to distance myself from this “filter” and think of the children’s (partner’s) experiences in order to be “open-minded” for successful communication					
<i>Think of situations when current context interfered with communication, prepare it for the group discussion or self-evaluation</i>					
14. I understand that every communication process takes place within a communication context					
15. I know that this context consists of: time, place, situation, and everything else that has preceded between the communication partners					

Erasmus+ project “Extending Social Educators Competences” ESEC
 Project Nr. **2018-1-PL01-KA204-051126**

16. I know that all messages of the communication partners have to be “heard” at two levels: the information-level and the relationship-level (<i>please, be prepared for a discussion</i>)					
17. I know that at the information-level the message includes opinions, emotions, experiences, values etc. of the partners					
18. I understand that at the relationship-level the messages might be strongly influenced by emotional tension between communication partners					
19. I can hold back my emotions, so that I can communicate in a rational manner					
20. I can simplify my language, so that my partner can understand more easily what I mean					
21. I understand that communication requires certain abilities like the following (<i>mention some of them and suggest for discussion</i>):					
22. I can listen actively to what my partner (children) say, e.g. I can put myself in his/her position					
23. I have a high self-estimation that allows me to communicate with others in an honest way					
24. I understand the importance of the meta-communicative competence (e.g. understanding principles of communication)					

Discussion: what collaboration and communication skills we have, and which ones still need improvements?

If you are a teacher who delivers these classes: What should be of special attention in the program which you are going to offer the parents/choose for your individual development?

If you are a parent: How such classes for parents could be improved?

Part 3. Active listening – an important component of communication

(Modified from the TISSNTE project, 128825-CP-1-2006-1-UK-Comenius C21). Parent educators can choose any of the suggested activities or do all if there is enough time; it is possible also to suggest some activities for parent autonomous completion.

Communication is successful if partners are good listeners. Quite often in family communication fails if the partners do not know how to listen to each other. When you decide that you really want to listen to someone, and give them a chance to tell you whatever they want to tell you, then active listening is appropriate; it will not necessarily always be a counselling situation; in fact it is extremely useful in educator - group or parent – child communication.

The aims of active listening are to put the listener into a neutral, non-directive, non-judgmental frame



Erasmus+ project “Extending Social Educators Competences” ESEC
Project Nr. **2018-1-PL01-KA204-051126**

of mind, so that she can give full attention to the person who is speaking, and allow him to make his own way through his story without interference. We often think of it as a gift, because the luxury of talking through an issue without interruption or blocking of any kind is very rare indeed.

Activities should be introduced by a short instruction because Active listening is rear part of programs. : When you decide that you really want to listen to someone, and give them a chance to tell you whatever they want to tell you, then active listening is appropriate; it will not necessarily always be a counselling situation; in fact it is extremely useful in educator - group or parent – child communication. The aims of active listening are to put the listener into a neutral, non-directive, non-judgmental frame of mind, so that she/he can give full attention to the person who is speaking, and allow him to make his own way through his story without interference. We often think of it as a gift, because the luxury of talking through an issue without interruption or blocking of any kind is very rare indeed.

Activity 3-1. What is active listening and why it is important?

The participant group is split into two parts, each has an assignment that is not known to the other group: – one are the speaker’s group, one reads a text, speaks on the qualities of active listening, or on any chosen topic; the rest of the group watch the listeners (preferably each watches one listener) and makes notes that are evidences of attentive (or just opposite) listening. Preferably for reading/speaking a longer text is selected, lasting for some 10 minutes so that there is enough time to collect evidences. It might be a theoretical chapter.

Discuss the collected evidences, possible mistakes in perception, and reaction to the situation of those who are not attentive enough listeners.

Listening is an evidence of respect.

Afterword, they practice active listening in pairs, changing the roles. This practice can be videotaped and analysed as well.

The aim is to help parents or parent educators use evidences to better understand the concept and development of the active listening, as well as develop skills of a good listener. The focus of this practicing exercise is effective communication. It can be used at the beginner phase and also for experienced participants of the activity. The activity can be individual, and pair work – the choice depends on the participants.

Chapters for the exercise Active listening should be chosen by the educator.

Activity 3-2. Evidences of active listening

Active listening is a component of communication, perceiving some information, knowledge, evaluations, etc. that will be use to participate in communication or react. The participants:

- (a) individually read a small suggested chapter about active listening to answer some questions;
- (b) reflect on their experiences and select evidences of active listening.



Erasmus+ project “Extending Social Educators Competences” ESEC
Project Nr. **2018-1-PL01-KA204-051126**

Afterword, they practice active listening in pairs, changing the roles. This practice can be videotaped and analysed as well. The aim is to help parents, parent mentors/educators understand the concept and development of the active listening, as well as develop skills of a good listener. The focus of this practicing exercise practice is effective communication. It can be used at the beginner phase and also for experienced participants of the activity. The activity can be individual, and pair work – the choice depends on the participants.

Chapters for the exercise Active listening should be chosen by the educator.

Activity 3-3. The course seminar of this project suggested Half, R. (2015). 10 Quotes to Inspire Active Listening. (Available at: <https://www.roberthalf.com/blog/salaries-and-skills/10-quotes-to-inspire-active-listening>). The participants comment the Quotes to Inspire Active Listening (when time is limited, participants can choose one or two statements to comment, illustrate by their own situations when they were either successful or ‘bad’ listeners. This activity can be optional).

10 quotes to comment are (the focus of comments can be chosen either by participants or the educator):

- Listen at least as much as you talk.
- Listening is a sign of respect.
- Never stop listening, the speaker will decide when to stop; or you can apologise and ask to stop.
- Learn by listening and think what you can learn from your child or educator from a parent.
- Listening should be open, demonstrate interest in it and will to know the speaker’s view.
- Learn to bite your tongue, learn to keep silent when your partner/parent/child speaks.
- Don't try to multitask, do not suggest several topics or problems at a time.
- Use your eyes and your ears, demonstrate your ‘listening’ by all senses.
- Exercise the creative force, listening creates us, we obtain our qualities by listening.
- Do more listening than talking

Activity 3-4. Active listening compared to everyday conversation patterns

Suggest parent educators (or parents) to reflect on their everyday communication and note down the differences between Active listening and Normal conversational patterns (make a table), when the exercise is ready, suggest a discussion and conclusions, as well as statements on their achievements, what they have learned from this activity. From this activity, participants can see that there could be many other choices of responses.

Think of any other possible “Active listening” responses for the discussion. Very useful might be situations from the participant experience when violated one or more advise (of the 10 given here): interrupted talk by the listener had the effect of blocking the flow of what the talker wants to say, and directing the conversation in the direction of what the listener wants to know; people cannot manage to do active listening and anything else at the same time - that is what we mean when we say it requires strict self-discipline; you remember situations when your child stopped conversation by saying ‘you do not love me...’, etc.

1. _____
2. _____



Erasmus+ project “Extending Social Educators Competences” ESEC
Project Nr. **2018-1-PL01-KA204-051126**

Activity 3-5. Choosing a way of listening to your peers, family members, or anyone else (focus should be chosen). Suggest parents/parent educators to reflect on:

- a. In what situations do you think you would find active listening useful in your private life?
- b. List the “rewards” of active listening (what you can learn, acquire a skill to communicate, make friends, etc.)

Using nonverbal means is a powerful communication skill. Ask participants to describe a situation when either the speaker or the listener used nonverbals like facial expression, body postures and actions, body space boundaries, eye-contact, etc., and why these means are important in knowing if someone is listening to what others are talking about.

Discuss the term *appropriate eye contact*. How nonverbals can reflect a person’s inner world. Suggest a situation or choose one described by the course participants.

Activity 3-6. Self-evaluation to improve one’s skills of active listening

Suggest parent educators (or parents) to reflect on their everyday communication and note down the differences between Active listening and random conversational patterns (this can be a home-work; make a table), when the exercise is ready, suggest a discussion and conclusions, as well as statements on their achievements, what they have learned from this activity. From this activity, participants can see that there could be many other choices of responses.

Think of any other possible “Active listening” responses for the discussion. Very useful might be situations from the participant experience when violated one or more advise (of the 10 given here): interrupted talk by the listener had the effect of blocking the flow of what the talker wants to say, and directing the conversation in the direction of what the listener wants to know; people cannot manage to do active listening and anything else at the same time - that is what we mean when we say it requires strict self-discipline; you remember situations when your child stopped conversation by saying ‘you do not love me...’, etc.

1. _____
2. _____

Suggest parents/parent educators to reflect on:

- a. In what situations do you think you would find active listening useful in your private life?
- b. List the “rewards” of active listening (what you can learn, acquire a skill to communicate, make friends, etc.)

Note: the number of activities depend on the scope of the program, time allocated for the course/program, as well as the peculiarities or needs of the course participants - course educators can select the most appropriate activities and modify them.