

2.6 Practical activities that promote family involvement in school



The participation of the different actors that take part in the school scene is both a right and a duty that guarantees quality education. The ideal interaction between both systems – the family and the school – requires time, effort, training and research. This project is presented as a training activity to make the members of the education community more sensitive towards the need to reduce the gap between the school and the families, with special attention to those of immigrant origin or cultural minorities. The project also seeks to analyze what the presence of this kind of students means to the education centers and the way to tackle the new reality arising. Likewise, to shape all of it in specific ways that achieve actual and positive involvement of parents in the school, in order to improve and increase their children's opportunities.

Aims

- To understand the migration phenomenon and its effects on the education system.
- To reflect upon the attitudes generated by migration and the gypsy communities.
- To make proposals for integration and intercultural sensitization in the schools.
- To analyze the characteristics of the family nowadays and their effect on the education system.
- To identify and analyze the main barriers encountered in the family-school relationship.
- To promote the use of strategies that encourage the interaction between school and family.

- To acquire personal and professional skills to manage the communicative competence among families.
- To encourage the exchange of ideas and experiences among teachers.

Sessions in practice

1. Creating a positive atmosphere
2. Socio-emotional aspects of intercultural exchange
3. Family school relationship
4. Communication skills in the family-school relationship
5. Strategies for joint participation

Target group

Staff belonging to the education system and associated with the families (members of the board, guidance department, etc.)

Methodology

The course is divided in 5 modules. Each one includes an index card with the justification, objectives, contents, activities, timing – approx. – and evaluation of the module.

The planned contents of the course will be carried out in:

- Sessions to be attended in person, where there will be:
 - Lectures on the theoretical contents and/or objectives of the session.
 - Practical activities or group work
 - Analysis, evaluation and conclusions.
- Projects:
 - Individual or group projects, regarding proposals to improve the family/school relationship. This homework will be determined on the first day of the course.

Evaluation

The following indicators will be taken into account for the evaluation:

- Attendance and active participation of the participants taking the course.
- Preparation and presentation of the work assigned for homework.

In order to assess their performance in the activities of the course the participants will have to fill in a questionnaire at the end of the course.

Session 1: Creating a positive atmosphere

Justification

Communication is the basic tool to bring together education centers and families and work for the fulfillment of a common goal: to improve the education of the students. In order to make this real, it is essential to create both a sense of group and a good atmosphere of interaction, where communication and cooperation become the basis for joint work.

Objectives

- To achieve that the participants get to know each other better.
- To find out some of the participants' good points.
- To create a sense of group
- To encourage an atmosphere of openness, communication and honesty.

Contents

- The task force
- Communication

Activities/Time

- In search of the human treasure. 45 minutes.
- I see it like this. 60 minutes.

Evaluation

- Analysis of the session
- Proposal of extension or reinforcement

1. In search of the human treasure

A group is much more than the sum of the people that form it. Communication among people and the dynamics of their relationship are complex phenomena. Reflecting upon these phenomena can help to understand better how they arise, in what conditions and, ultimately, how to improve them. This is the aim of the following activities.

Objectives

- To achieve that the attendants get to know each other better.
- To discover some of the participants' values.
- Create a sense of group
- To encourage an atmosphere of openness and honesty.

Time: 45 minutes

- The lecturer starts by reviewing the objectives of the session and asks the group whether anyone has ever participated in a treasure hunt. In this case, the treasure to be found is of human nature. The lecturer then reads the questions out loud, in case the participants want to remove or add any.
- The lecturer gives out the papers and tells the participants that they have 15 minutes to look around for a person per item to answer the questions, trying not to repeat names. The answers are written down on the questions sheet.
- Finally, the group exchanges ideas, commenting on the phrases that everybody has taken down. In some cases, the participants might want to elaborate on phrases that sound peculiar, funny, etc.
- This activity must be done in a room with enough space for people to move around freely.

HUMAN TREASURE HUNT SHEET

1. Look for someone who was born in another country (write his/her name and birthplace):
.....
2. Look for someone who can say that something good has recently happened to him/her and wants to tell you about it:
.....
3. Look for someone whose hand is the same size as yours:
4. Look for someone who wants to tell you the funniest thing that has ever happened to him/her:
.....
5. Look for someone who can whistle:
6. Look for someone who would like to tell you what he/she would teach, if he/she had to teach only one thing to the human race (an idea, a skill, a precept, a law, a demonstration of something, etc.):
.....
7. Look for someone who would like to live in any other place on earth for a year.
Where would he/she go? Why?:
.....
8. Look for someone who is concerned about something and wants to tell you about it:
.....
9. Look for someone who needs a gesture of affection. Give it to him/her:
10. Find someone who can tell you who has had most influence on his/her life and why:
.....
11. Look for someone that you liked at first sight:
12. Find someone who has had positive experiences related to the participation of the families in the school and wants to tell you about it:
.....

13. Look for someone who can tell jokes and ask him/her to tell you one
14. Look for someone who can tell you what he/she remembers as the happiest time in his/her life.
And the saddest?
.....
15. Find someone who tells you the name of a famous person he/she would choose to talk for an hour
with and why?
.....
16. Look for someone who can teach you some Latin dancing
17. Look for someone who believes in cultural diversity as a value and can explain why
.....
18. Look for someone who can tell you which three things he/she would take to a deserted island
.....
19. Find someone who tells you, if he/she could change the world what he/she would change
.....

Analysis

We can make the analysis starting with the following questions: Did you have trouble answering all the questions? Who did you find things in common with? What do you have in common? Are we similar to or different from the rest of the participants? Was it easy or difficult to talk about feelings? What was this activity useful for?

2. I see it like this

A great part of what happens in a school, from our daily work to all human relationships must be understood in terms of communication. If communication fails, problems and conflicts will increase. We understand communication as a dynamic process, always continuous and changing. Its com-

ponents interact constantly, therefore, everyone has an influence on everyone else. In order for communication to take place, it is not enough to convey a message. It is necessary that the message is received and that it has the same meaning for both the recipient and the emitter. Otherwise, communication cannot exist.

Objectives

- To analyze the subjective element in communication.
- To understand that communication can deteriorate, if the knowledge is incomplete.
- To show the need to attend to each of the parts that make up the whole, in the analysis of the situations.

Time: 60 minutes

Ask for three volunteers and get out of the classroom with them. Explain the task. They have to make an objective description of an object, for example, a cell phone, following these instructions:

- Each of them has to describe a part of the cell phone, without previously agreeing how to make the description.
- They have 5 minutes to choose which part of the cell phone to describe, (for example, one can describe the screen, another one the keyboard and the third one the back of the phone) and to prepare the description.
- They cannot say what the object is, nor what it is used for, nor what they think of it. It is only an objective description of the cell phone.

The group then has to guess what the object their classmates are describing is. Then, the volunteers proceed to make their description, one by one in front of the class. At the end of the descriptions, the rest of the class has to guess what the object is and what parts of the descriptions made them think indeed it was a cell phone. Class discussion about the different interpretations of the descriptions.

Analysis

- Can partial knowledge or information lead us to get the wrong idea?
- Can we analyze a fact without having complete information?
- How often does this happen in real life? And, at school?
- Can we think of an experience where something similar happened?
- Think of an example of how, having only partial information about someone, it affected us.
- What happens in the course of this activity also occurs in everyday life, in the news, in opinions, gossip, etc.
- In order to achieve good communication, it is necessary to have observation and description abilities.
- A situation can be interpreted in different ways, depending on how one looks at it.

- It is necessary to have complete information before giving an opinion about something.
- When one thinks or accepts that, from only one viewpoint, one can get the whole picture, or when one focuses on only one part and not on the whole, there is a loss of dynamism and both the coding and decoding of information are simplified, leading to absurd situations.
- It is necessary to change perspectives, to direct one's attention to different aspects of the situation. To take captures of a reality from all angles, until one achieves a view of the whole picture.
- It is necessary to pay attention to the information feedback while dealing with people.

Suggestion

At the end of the activity, read the fable *The Blind Men and the Elephant*:

*It was six men of Indostan
To learning much inclined,
Who went to see the Elephant
(Though all of them were blind)
That each by observation
Might satisfy his mind
The First approached the Elephant
And happening to fall
Against his broad and sturdy side,
At once began to bawl:
"God bless me! But the Elephant
Is very like a wall!"
The Second, feeling of the tusk,
Cried, "Ho! What have we here
So very round and smooth and sharp?
To me 'tis mighty clear
This wonder of an Elephant
Is very like a spear!"
The Third one approached the animal,
And happening to take
The squirming trunk within his hands,
Thus boldly up and spake:*

"I see," quoth he, "the Elephant
Is very like a snake!"
The Fourth reached out an eager hand,
And felt about the knee,
"What most this wondrous beast is like
Is mighty plain," quoth he;
"Tis clear enough the Elephant
Is very like a tree!"
The Fifth, who chanced to touch the ear,
Said: "E'en the blindest man
Can tell what this resembles most;
Deny the fact who can
This marvel of an Elephant
Is very like a fan!"
The Sixth no sooner had begun
About the beast to grope,
Than, seizing on the swinging tail
That fell within his scope,
"I see," quoth he, "the Elephant
Is very like a rope!"
And so these men of Indostan
Disputed loud and long,
Each in his own opinion
Exceeding stiff and strong,
Though each was partly in the right,
And all were in the wrong!

Moral:

So oft in theologic wars,
The disputants, I ween,
Rail on in utter ignorance
Of what each other mean,
And prate about an Elephant
Not one of them has seen

John Godfrey Saxe (1816-1887) based his poem on an Indostani fable.

Session 2: Socio-emotional aspects of intercultural exchange

Justification

The attendance of students from different cultural backgrounds in the schools, makes it necessary to reflect upon their participation and integration in the group, the organization of the classrooms and the relationship with the families. In the classroom, the fact that they are different might become an exclusion factor that will affect the individual in his/her personal, social and educational development. This calls for a systematic and integral approach that involves all the education agents. This situation, increasingly more common, should give us food for thought to join efforts and work to prepare strategies that allow a full and progressive integration of the students and their families in the schools. There are many ways to promote respect and living together among socio-culturally different individuals or groups, fighting against racial or ethnical discrimination, in order to develop as respectful subjects, interested in cultural diversity. This module presents an approach to intercultural education from the point of view of feelings and personal experience, examining values and modifying and creating attitudes.

Objectives

- To make certain disfavored groups visible.
- To encourage attitudes of respect and empathy.
- To personally experience the discrimination that society practices against certain social groups.
- To find out the social reality of the immigrants living in extreme situations and the consequences of the migration process on their health.
- To help to reflect upon these social situations and their influence on the families and, therefore, on the students when attending school.

Contents

- Intercultural education
- Education in values
- Stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination, exclusion
- Migratory bereavement. The Ulysses Syndrome.

Activities/Time

- We are interested in "the nobodies". 20 minutes
- Who am I? 30 minutes
- This is the migration story of 60 minutes
- Without permission. 20 minutes

Evaluation

- Analysis and reinforcement of contents
- Direct consequences of a situation of educational exclusion (involvement of the education center)
- Proposals to act upon

1. We are interested in the nobodies

Source: Moradillo, F y Aragón, S. Adolescentes, inmigración e interculturalidad. Aprendiendo a convivir. Ed. CCS. 2006. Madrid

Objectives

- To make certain disfavored groups visible.
- To encourage attitudes of respect and empathy.

Time: 20 minutes

- Give out a copy of this text to all the participants:

THE NOBODIES

Fleas dream of buying themselves a dog and the nobodies dream of getting out from under their poverty, that some magic day, all of a sudden, good luck will rain down on them, that it will downpour bucketfuls of good luck; but good luck doesn't rain down yesterday, today,

tomorrow, or ever, good luck doesn't even drizzle down from heaven, no matter how hard the nobodies claim for it, even if their left hand itches, or they get up on the right foot, or when they start the year getting a new broom.

The nobodies: children of nobodies', owners of nothing.

The nobodies: the no-ones, the nobodied, running for the carrot, dying their life, screwed, screwed every which way.

Who are not, even though they are.
Who don't speak languages, but rather dialects.
Who don't follow religions, but rather superstitions.
Who don't produce art, but rather handicrafts.
Who don't practice culture, but rather folklore.
Who aren't human beings, but human resources.
Who have no face, but have arms.
Who have no name, but rather a number.
Who don't appear in the history of the world, but rather in the gory crime chronicles of the local newspapers.
The nobodies, the ones who are worth less than the bullet that kills them.

Eduardo Galeano, The Book of the Embraces

- After reading the text, the lecturer gives the participants a few minutes to think about the phrases that impressed them more and then explain why.
- The class then identifies THE NOBODIES in our milieu and in our society.
- The lecturer writes the following phrases on the blackboard and asks the participants to complete them.

HOWEVER, THE NOBODIES

ARE

SPEAK

FOLLOW

DO/MAKE

PRACTICE

HAVE

ARE WORTH

THEY ARE BEINGS

Analysis

- How did they feel when they read the text?
- Do you think A PERSON can be A NOBODY?

Suggestion

We propose the activity "The Box of Affection": Each of the participants writes his/her name on a piece of paper, puts it in a bag and when everybody has introduced his/her paper, they proceed to take one out at a time. On the back of the paper, they write a positive message for that person, and sign it. Then they introduce the message in the box decorated to be "the box of affection".

Before the end of the session, pick up the messages. From now on, anyone can leave messages in "the box of affection", whenever they feel like it. The lecturer will be in charge of reminding the participants of the box.

2. Who am I?

The way people regard us has an influence on our concept of what we are and what we can be. Stereotypes determine not only intercultural living together, but also the immigrant's own identity. Our attitudes toward people we consider different may be very subtle and we may not be aware that we are behaving in a prejudiced way.

Nevertheless, prejudice exists and has a clear influence on interpersonal relationships, in such a way that it may become an exclusion factor.

Objectives

- To personally experience the sort of discrimination that society practices against certain social groups.
- To expose common prejudice.

Time: 30 minutes

Material: Cardboard strips, markers, Scotch-tape (We recommend to carry out this activity in the course of a breakfast or afternoon snack, if possible.)

- Make sure that the place where the activity is going to take place has no mirrors and that all the participants know the rules.
- The lecturer brings cardboard strips containing information that might create prejudice in the person that reads them. For example, English tourist, customs officer, Pakistani, refugee, alien prostitute, Spanish unemployed, Black man, immigrant trafficker, Chinese, policeman, Ecuadorian, Muslim, non-profit organization member, Red Cross volunteer, woman, journalist, Cuban, abuser, Moor, businessman, priest, gypsy, skin-head, Romanian, Beckham, non-documented alien, Arab sheik, etc.

- The lecturer explains to the participants that they will put the cardboard strip, like a band, on their forehead/head. The contents of the strip will cover the forehead and they will not be allowed to see those contents or read out loud what they see on the others' forehead.
- As soon as everybody has put his/her band on, the participants start dealing with each other as though they were the person indicated in the band. IT IS NOT A PART OF THE ACTIVITY TO TRY TO GUESS WHAT CHARACTER THEY ARE SUPPOSED TO BE, ACCORDING TO THE BAND.
- Once everybody has his/her band on, the lecturer reminds them that they should not make any direct reference or give hints, regarding the contents of the band. They just have to deal with each other in the most natural way, according to the way society treats these characters, reproducing the usual stereotypes in ordinary life.
- They can choose to talk about a specific topic and the exchange of ideas goes on for about 10 minutes, in pairs or small groups. The lecturer participates as well, punctually offering comments or questions that can prove to be provocative or stimulating for the conversations.
- Afterwards, they can take off their bands and still without looking at the contents, they should sit in a circle and discuss their comments. Everybody talks about the way they felt and how they were treated in the exercise.
- How does prejudice affect people's behavior?
- We proceed to a quick round of questions to find out who everybody thinks he/she is, and then we compare it with what's written in the cardboard strips and see whether it coincides.
- It is important to highlight how certain social groups were treated, what these people's feelings might be, and whether the kind of treatment we gave them can be considered discriminatory or not.
- The process of discrimination is triggered because we transform stereotypes into prejudice. This can be explained with the following chart:
 - 1st Stereotype.** Cognitive component.
I think that the gypsies are ... (conflictive, inferior, brave, etc.)
 - 2nd Prejudice.** Emotional component
The gypsies **make me feel** ... (insecure, scared, etc)
 - 3rd Discrimination.** Behavioral component.
In front of gypsies, **I behave** ... (in an unfair way, etc.)
- **Discrimination:** Hostile behavior against other people. Discrimination can be direct and produce physical or verbal aggression, or, more often so, indirect, and can be seen in legislation, language, hidden curriculum, attitudes, etc.
- It is necessary that the native society promote positive attitudes, behaviors and social changes that prevent discrimination and favor positive relationships that enable the specific development of minorities.
- On the other hand, the ethnical minorities also have to get to know and modify the stereotypes and prejudice they also harbor against the majority. They have to invite the others to have a look at their own culture, promoting positive attitudes, behaviors and social changes that prevent their own discrimination and improve their living conditions.
- We proceed to make a balance of the aspects we have worked on: verbal and non-verbal communication, empathy, psychological

Analysis

- How did we feel? How were we treated? What sort of fears surfaced? Were we comfortable or uncomfortable?
- How did our behavior change in the course of the activity? How did our attitude change? In what circumstances did we feel provoked?
- How is communication affected by first impressions? Or, by the image the person gives of him/herself?
- Has everybody's word the same value?
- In what circumstances did we feel that we couldn't get out of the prejudiced label we had been given?

violence, invasion of personal space, expression of stereotypes, people's feelings, etc.

- Assessment of the activity in general. What sort of feelings have been touched, what parts the participants liked and which ones they didn't, encourage everybody to associate all of it to everyday life.

3. This is the migration story of ...

"She found him sitting upon the beach with his eyes ever filled with tears, and dying of sheer homesickness ..."

The Odyssey

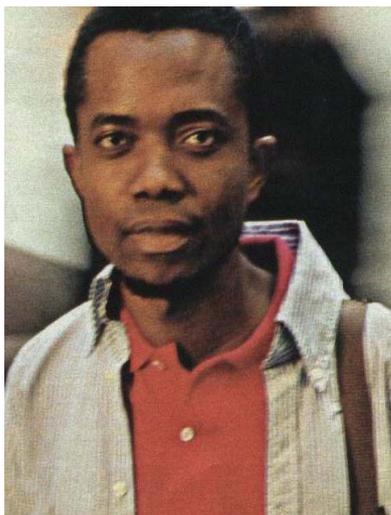
Migration is a natural phenomenon associated to evolution, to the adaptation of all living beings. The ability to migrate successfully to very different environments is a sign of identity of our species and one of the reasons for our success in evolution. The history of the migrations is the history of mankind. However, each migration has its own specific characteristics.

Objectives

- To get familiar with the social reality experienced by immigrants that live in extreme conditions and the consequences of the migration process upon their health (Ulysses' Syndrome).
- To help to reflect upon how these social circumstances can affect the family and how such effects can appear at school.

Time: 60 minutes

- The class is divided into teams of 4 or 5 participants and each team is handed out a practical case, so that they can answer different questions, trying to unveil the story of the people in the photographs. They are given 15 minutes to do so.
- The lecturer introduces the concept of **bereavement** (process of reorganization of one's personality that occurs when the subject loses or is separated from someone/something meaningful for him/her) and its phases: denial, resistance, acceptance and restitution. The lecturer explains the characteristics of the **migration bereavement**: partial, ambiguous loss, recurrent/chronic (fantasy of the return), multiple and transgenerational.
- While the class gets on with their task, the lecturer writes the 7 kinds of bereavement on the blackboard.
 1. Family and loved ones (small children, ill parents, etc.)
 2. Language
 3. Culture (values, customs, etc.)
 4. Land (climate, landscape, etc.)
 5. Social status (papers, job, house, etc.)
 6. Contact with the group he/she belongs to (prejudice, racism, etc)
 7. Risks regarding physical integrity (journeys, accidents, disease, etc.)
- Once the participants have finished their task, they choose a speaker per team to present their results for all the class.
- Meanwhile, the lecturer takes notes, associating what the speakers are saying with the 7 sorts of bereavement on the blackboard, according to the difficulties encountered by the immigrants in their migration process.
- When the immigrant overcomes the ability to adapt, there is no possible bereavement: ULYSSES' SYNDROME.



WHO IS IT?

Source: Moreno Sánchez, J. y Álvarez Silva, I. Médicos del mundo. Aragón.

Name:

Place of birth (rural or urban):

Description of the family unit left at home: What conditions are they living in? Who did he/she leave behind? What sort of relationship does he/she maintain with the members of his/her family?

What is his/her mother tongue? Where/when does he/she speak it? What other languages does he/she speak?

What is his/her academic background?
 What did he/she do in his/her native country? What kind of jobs did he/she have there?

What is he/she like? (shy, sociable, etc).

Why and how did he/she make up his/her mind to emigrate? How long has he/she been here? How did he/she come to Spain?

What opportunities does he/she see in this country that were not offered in his/her own?

What religion does he/she profess? Does he/she practise it here?

What cultural values and customs does he/she keep practising here?

What does he/she miss from his/her country? (landscape, light, food, etc.)

What is his/her opinion about his/her country nowadays?

Does he/she get together with people from his/her native country? Where are his/her present friends from?

What are his/her hobbies? What does he/she do in his/her spare time?

What kind of jobs has he/she had since he/she arrived here?

Does he/she have a residence permit? And a work permit?

Does he/she feel well regarded in his job, by his friends?

Is he/she satisfied?

Does he/she feel like an immigrant?

Does he/she have plans to go back home?

What personal or social events have marked him/her in his/her country?

What personal or social events have marked him/her in the recipient country?

Has he/she suffered from racist attitudes?

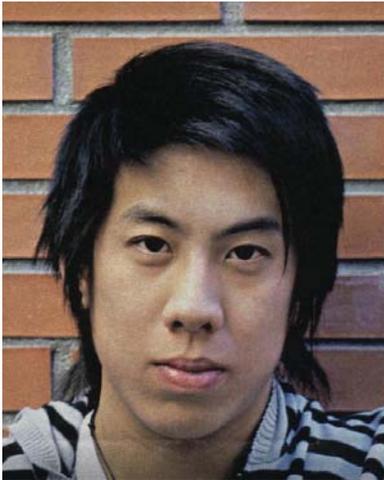
Has he/she ever feared for his/her life?

A memory:

.....
.....
.....

A dream:

.....
.....
.....



WHO IS IT?

Name:

Place of birth (rural or urban):

Description of the family unit left at home: What conditions are they living in? Who did he/she leave behind? What sort of relationship does he/she maintain with the members of his/her family?

What is his/her mother tongue? Where/when does he/she speak it? What other languages does he/she speak?

What is his/her academic background?

What did he/she do in his/her native country? What kind of jobs did he/she have there?

What is he/she like? (shy, sociable, etc).

Why and how did he/she make up his/her mind to emigrate? How long has he/she been here?

How did he/she come to Spain?

What opportunities does he/she see in this country that were not offered in his/her own?

What religion does he/she profess? Does he/she practice it here?

What cultural values and customs does he/she keep practicing here?

What does he/she miss from his/her country? (landscape, light, food, etc.)

What is his/her opinion about his/her country nowadays?

Does he/she get together with people from his/her native country? Where are his/her present friends from?

What are his/her hobbies? What does he/she do in his/her spare time?

What kind of jobs has he/she had since he/she arrived here?

Does he/she have a residence permit? And a work permit?

Does he/she feel well regarded in his job, by his friends?

Is he/she satisfied?

Does he/she feel like an immigrant?

Does he/she have plans to go back home?

What personal or social events have marked him/her in his/her country?

What personal or social events have marked him/her in the recipient country?

Has he/she suffered from racist attitudes?

Has he/she ever feared for his/her life?

A memory:

.....
.....
.....

A dream:

.....
.....
.....



WHO IS IT?

Name:

Place of birth (rural or urban):

Description of the family unit left at home: What conditions are they living in? Who did he/she leave behind? What sort of relationship does he/she maintain with the members of his/her family?

What is his/her mother tongue? Where/when does he/she speak it? What other languages does he/she speak?

What is his/her academic background?

What did he/she do in his/her native country? What kind of jobs did he/she have there?

What is he/she like? (shy, sociable, etc).

Why and how did he/she make up his/her mind to emigrate? How long has he/she been here?

How did he/she come to Spain?

What opportunities does he/she see in this country that were not offered in his/her own?

What religion does he/she profess? Does he/she practice it here?

What cultural values and customs does he/she keep practicing here?

What does he/she miss from his/her country? (landscape, light, food, etc.)

What is his/her opinion about his/her country nowadays?

Does he/she get together with people from his/her native country? Where are his/her present friends from?

What are his/her hobbies? What does he/she do in his/her spare time?

What kind of jobs has he/she had since he/she arrived here?

Does he/she have a residence permit? And a work permit?

Does he/she feel well regarded in his job, by his friends?

Is he/she satisfied?

Does he/she feel like an immigrant?

Does he/she have plans to go back home?

What personal or social events have marked him/her in his/her country?

What personal or social events have marked him/her in the recipient country?

Has he/she suffered from racist attitudes?

Has he/she ever feared for his/her life?

A memory:

.....
.....
.....

A dream:

.....
.....
.....

Analysis

In the course of the discussion, the lecturer will complete the group's input, trying to go deeper into the most important, frequent and meaningful issues. We might include the following, among others:

- **Mental health:** It refers to the welfare that a person experiences as a result of a good functional balance between thought, feelings and behaviors, as well as a result of an optimal ability to enjoy social life, work and entertainment. Migration is a risk factor to mental health.
- The **Ulysses' Syndrome** is not a disease. It is a series of physical and psychological symptoms that appear when a person suffers **extreme and prolonged levels of stress**, due to his/her living conditions caused by the migration process.
Symptoms:
 - **DEPRESSION:** sadness, loneliness, fear, stress, profound sensation of failure, weeping easily, frustration, loss of sexual interest.
 - **ANXIETY:** tension (protests, demands, etc.), irritability, excessive and recurrent preoccupation, insomnia.
 - **SOMATIC:** headaches, fatigue, osteoarticular problems, abdominal and thoracic disorders.
 - **DISSOCIATION:** temporary disorders that affect memory, attention, concentration, awareness, identity and disorientation.
- The people who would potentially be more affected are all the immigrants, particularly those who are illegal or who might soon become illegal.
- **Determining difficulties:** failure of their migration project, fight for survival, fear and loneliness.
- **How can this affect the children?** Disorders associated to infant/juvenile migration: loss of sphincter control, learning problems such as reading and writing deficiencies, physical illnesses, sleep disorders, headaches, anxiety, hyperactivity, lack of attention, behavior disorders, inhibition, shame, regression regarding maturity processes, disorientation, confusion.
- **Impediments to integration:** isolated, single mother from rural origin. One-parent families with financial problems, excessive working hours, little time left to look after their children. Families with financial problems and without legal papers.
- It is necessary that the family undertake the migration process together.
- **What can we do?** Detect the problem from the start, prevent it and tackle it from a multi-disciplinary viewpoint.
- **Tools:** support and orientation
 - Keep basic needs covered: food, housing, clothes.
 - Start taking measures towards legalization: register in the census, get some sort of health card, passports in order, etc.
 - Become a member of an association: get together with other social groups to improve social life.
 - Find out about all the social services provided by the city.
 - Set up short-term objectives (to increase the sensation of control).
 - Try to keep in touch with friends and family in native country.
 - Learn about the culture and customs of foster country.
 - Develop social skills: job interviews, communication, active listening, etc.
 - Develop skills and attitudes such as, assertion, empathy, self-esteem, problem solution, effective expression of feelings.
 - Learn and practice relaxation techniques.
 - Get help from social professionals such as, psychologists, psychiatrists, doctors, etc.

4. Without permission

Objectives

- To personally and actively experience a situation of exclusion from different points of view, allowing reflection upon the possible alternatives to the performed action, feelings involved and their relationship with racism, xenophobia...
- To highlight the strategies the majority groups apply to include or exclude members of the minorities.

Time: 20 minutes

Without giving any clues, the lecturer sets up the following activity that will allow the participants to experience a situation of exclusion and promote everybody's involvement. It is very important that the participants carry out strictly the instructions contained in the following steps.

1. The lecturer asks for 5 volunteers to stand up in a circle in front of the class. They must stand very close to each other, without leaving any space between them, as joined together as possible.
2. The rest of the class is instructed to observe closely everything that's going to happen, while insisting on their keeping in mind everything they see or hear. This usually guarantees that the class remains expectant all the time.
3. The lecturer then asks for another volunteer to try and get into the tight circle his/her classmates are making. The volunteer has to try to get in, using any means possible. Insist on "every means possible". He/she has 45 seconds to carry out the order.
4. It usually happens that the sixth volunteer tries to get into the circle, exhausting all possibilities his/her strength allows, such as, hugging, squeezing, pushing, hitting, tickling, etc. The group will join forces not to let him/her in. Whether he/she manages to break into the circle, or not, is not the important point. The lecturer lets the 45 seconds go by, while the rest of the class attentively observes the action.

5. Next, the round of questions to find out how everybody felt in this situation, letting as many participants elaborate as much as possible. After a few minutes, the lecturer poses the following questions: Why didn't you let your classmate in? What messages did you send each other in order to keep him/her out? Did you ever think about letting him/her in, instead of blocking him/her out?
6. Then it's the lonely volunteer's turn to say how he/she felt in that situation. After his/her reply, the lecturer asks: Did you at some point think about asking the group to please let you in? What did "all means possible" mean to you?
7. Then it's the observers' turn to say what they saw and heard. It may happen that the volunteers that make the circle interpret the instructions in their own way and don't follow the orders strictly. For example, the group understands that they can't let the volunteer get in, that they couldn't open the circle ... it will then be the observers who point out what were the specific orders given by the lecturer.
8. These questions usually baffle the participants and they will make up excuses or just keep quiet.

Analysis

- The lecturer will then draw conclusions with the collaboration of the whole class, with questions such as: What is your opinion about this situation? Was force the quickest way to get what we wanted? Did it leave us a nice memory? How did the 'circle' respond when greater force was used? How did the lonely volunteer feel, whether he managed to get in or not? What's the observers' opinion about it? Why do we interpret or follow orders we consider unfair? In our society, who are the strongest groups? And, the weakest? How are foreigners, minorities, immigrants, etc., received? What does the circle stand for? (A country that hates immigrants, a school that rejects a new student or one with problems).
- In our society the circle could represent privileges, power, money, work, housing, etc. What strategies do minorities put in practice to access these resources? How do the majority groups defend themselves from the minorities?

- It is interesting to clarify the circumstances and not blame the group for their reactions in the course of the activity. Surprise, shyness, scarce time, feeling observed ... All of this contributes to put the group in a difficult situation. In unknown, difficult circumstances that make us nervous, we usually behave as though in a rush and run the risk of taking the least reflexive short-cuts that lead us to the worst consequences both for us and for the rest of the people. Therefore, we should always take some time to think before acting, figure out possible alternatives and solutions and the likely consequences of our behavior.
- We can also link this to the problem of assuming things far beyond the instructions themselves. The danger of following strict, inflexible rules ... of deciding beyond rules or orders that might be disproportionate, without delegating responsibility in people of higher rank or relevance.
- It can also occur that the activity is not carried out as explained here, because the person in charge of breaking up the circle asks for permission, or because the group decide to let him/her in, after all. In that case, the lecturer would make a question transfer, asking the participants whether this is what usually happens in our society. That is, whether foreigners, minorities, immigrants are often as easily welcomed in our society. It is also convenient to let the participants know that force is usually the first solution groups give to solve a situation as the one presented here. Regardless of the age of the group participating in such a game, in 90% of the cases, force is the first alternative. We would then think what would have happened if the activity had been carried out as planned in the first case, using all the questions mentioned above.
- This is also a good moment to establish the difference between violence (a calculated attitude with the specific aim to submit, control, use, abuse, etc.) and what might be better understood as a spontaneous impulse of adaptation or survival, a defense reflex or an involuntary action.

- Assessment of the activity, feelings that were awakened, everyday situations where we might observe this kind of behavior or similar. Observers and lecturer give their opinions about the group. It is important that the group extend the meaning and symbolism of the activity, as it will be useful for the following activities.

Session 3: The family – school relationship

Justification

Several educational agents take part in the individual's development, education and socialization, however, there are two basic ones that are forced to communicate, understand and help each other: the school and the family. Their relationship is inserted in the articulation between two institutions with asymmetric power and in a social and political context that places them in the debate between public and private interests. Although they should be considered juxtaposed spaces, what is more often perceived is their separation, a distance, if not a conflict, between them. This means that both territories, the school's and the family's are constantly under watch, followed closely, as though they were both afraid of an invasion or intrusion, by one or the other. Therefore, it is necessary that both institutions look for the place and moment to approach to each other and exchange ideas; communicate and work together for a common aim: their children's/students' education.

Objectives

- To analyze the relationship family – school.
- To make people aware of the benefits of joint work between families and schools
- To sponsor the exchange of ideas and experiences regarding this topic among the teachers and professional personnel.
- To facilitate the creation of a proposal plan to integrate schools and families.
- To promote the use of strategies that generate integration between schools and families.

Contents

- The school – family relationship, characteristics
- Spaces and ways of communication in the schools

Activities/Time

- Schools and families, difficult relationship? 90 minutes
- "Non-magic" potions. 60 minutes

Evaluation/Analysis

- Proposal of experiences
- To go deeper into the aspects that make the family-school relationship easier

1. Families and schools: A difficult relationship?

Objectives

- To analyze the relationship school-family.
- To make people aware of the benefits of joint work between families and school.
- To sponsor the exchange of ideas and experiences regarding this topic, among the teachers staff.

Time: 90 minutes

Layout

- The instructor asks the participants to draw a circle on a sheet of paper. The circle represents total and global responsibility for the students' education. Then they have to divide the circle into sectors (like cutting out pieces of a cake) and then indicate what sort of responsibility they confer on each of the actors involved in education: students, teachers, families, etc. They have a few minutes to come up with a graph. Then they are asked to write down what responsibilities are assumed by which actors, and where. Then they compare ideas and point out where they agree and/or disagree.
- Read out loud Aesop's fable "The Father and his Sons"

A father had a family of sons who were perpetually quarreling among themselves. When he failed to heal their disputes by his exhortations, he determined to give them a practical illustration of the evils of disunion; and for this purpose he one day told them to bring him a bundle of sticks. When they had done so, he placed the faggot into the hands of each of them in succession, and ordered them to break it in pieces. They tried with all their strength, and were not able to do it. He next opened the faggot, took the sticks separately, one by one, and again put them into his sons' hands, upon which they broke them easily. He then addressed them in these words: "My sons, if you are of one mind, and unite to assist each other, you will be as this faggot, uninjured by all the attempts of your enemies; but if you are divided among yourselves, you will be broken as easily as these sticks."

The instructor starts the debate, posing the following questions:

- Can we compare what happens to the brothers with what happens between the school and the families?
- Would students' education improve if it found support in the cooperation between school and families?
- What are the advantages of working together, each one playing its role?
- Could we dare to change our respective roles a bit?
- Can we make the families' and the school's work supplementary?

The participants are handed out a sheet with questions that might help them to reflect upon the subject.

- What sort of relationship do we want to establish with the families?
- What do we want to communicate with the families for?
- What and how do we communicate?
- What are the families expecting from the school?

The group is divided in teams to discuss the matter and draw conclusions. Afterwards, a speaker from each team will expose them.

Analysis

As the speakers expose their conclusions, the lecturer will complete their contributions and try to delve more deeply in the most important, frequent or meaningful reflections. We might include the following, among others:

- As far as the involvement of the families in their children's education is concerned, there has been some progress, in certain moments more than in others. Nevertheless, an imbalance regarding the families' power of negotiation has been maintained, which, in turn, limits the acknowledgement of their role.
- The relationship is conditioned by the attitudes, past and present experiences of the different agents that represent the school (administration, teachers, parents' associations, families, etc.), and the context.
- The structure of the school and the administration teams and teachers staff's way of doing things may condition parents' participation in the school.
- Setting up channels of communication among parents, a certain habit and a structure that allows participation makes their involvement easier, also in the secondary school, but mainly in kindergarten and primary cycles.
- The school has to follow a certain coherence as far as the best way to establish fluent relations with the families. In addition, the school should clarify and differentiate the roles played by both the school and the families, showing they are supplementary.
- It is necessary to find out and understand what is the parents' role, listening and paying attention to what they have to say.
- Promoting the participation of all the families (and, especially, of the immigrant ones), improving information and, particularly, communi-

cation, sensitizing them of the need for their participation, and training both families and teachers to achieve their goals are the priorities to fulfill, what is most commonly accepted: to shorten the distance between these two institutions, which, instead of working together on a common project, more often than not, seem to be watching their respective "territories".

- Parents' participation is not a program of activities; it is a process that requires constant energy and effort. To achieve genuine participation, it is necessary to follow a process, a continuum that might be summarized as follows:
 - To inform INVOLVES, among others, to welcome, translate, listen, understand, train ...
 - To give an opinion INVOLVES to meet, converse, have time and a place ...
 - To make decisions (through cooperation and involvement). Parents' associations, councils, delegates ...
 - To carry out the decisions made and planned (involvement).

2. "Non-magic" potions

Objectives

- To identify the strong and weak points of the relationship family-school.
- To sponsor the making of integration proposals for the relationship family-school.
- To promote the use of strategies that generate integration between family and school.

Time: 60 minutes

- The lecturer divides the class in teams of 4 or 5 people and hands them out a copy of the document "issues that hamper the family – school relationship".
- The teams have to read the list and add any other issues that, according to their experience, might complete it

- In the squares on the left they have to number the issues, according to the relevance they grant it in the relationship family-school. Number 1 would be the issue that most hampers a cooperation environment between the families and the school, and they also have to give their reasons why it does. Follow the numbering until all the issues have been covered and discussed.
- Once the teams have finished their task, a speaker from each one will explain and justify their conclusions in front of all the class.

ISSUES THAT HAMPER THE RELATIONSHIP FAMILY-SCHOOL

	Changes in the family structure and roles: fewer children, single parent and new families, foster families, less interaction with different generations, working women, immigrant families with different role-models, etc.
	Changes in the laws of education that have created distrust in the education system, both in families and in society in general.
	An increase in the work load and responsibilities that the schools have to fulfill (early morning programs, open schools, school canteens, etc.) in an atmosphere of distrust in the teachers' professional adequacy for these tasks.
	The schools' failure to recognize what families are expecting from the school (useful knowledge, taking care of their children, integral training, values, priority in the marks given, improvement of social mobility, etc.)
	Misunderstandings regarding responsibilities that have deepened the gap between schools and families. As an institution, the families regard the school as "non-dynamic" or conservative.
	Socio-economic conditions: drawbacks in their living conditions prevent parents from participating in the school, long working days, low education level, lack of interest or motivation, etc.)
	Cultural barriers: difference in values, family roles, expectations. Migration project, pragmatic build-up of a "correct" relationship with the school and its teachers, different education system, school regulations, ways of establishing relationships before their present schooling, etc.
	Language barriers: lack of or no knowledge of the language they have to communicate in, lack of interpreters/translators in the schools.
	Institutional barriers: attitudes of teachers and administration, hierarchic organization of the relations, space/time, agents outside the education system, etc.
	Conveying of punctual/focused information regarding dysfunctional issues.
	Fatalistic attitudes , such as, "nothing can be done", or putting the blame on the others, such as, "these parents are impossible", etc.
	Mutual incomprehension: families that don't understand what the teachers expect from them, and vice versa.
	Lack of interest or preparation on the part of the teachers

The lecturer hands out a copy of the document “Practices that promote a better family – school relationship” to help focus the debate.

PRACTICES THAT PROMOTE A BETTER FAMILY-SCHOOL RELATIONSHIP

	Use an enabling and positive perspective , when dealing with the families. All families have responsibilities (although sometimes they aren't exercised adequately, or there is a lack of knowledge as to their extent). Invest less time exploring the problem and more time looking for solutions.
	Convey the parents the need to participate actively in their children's education. The parents are the ones that know their children better, they have tried several alternatives to deal with them, so this gives them experience. Progress can't be made without the parents, or if there is any, it may not last long enough or may be less stable.
	Help and accompany the parents in the process to meet the goals they want to achieve for their children.
	Respect the different paces and characteristics of the families , pay attention to their "diversity".
	Get to know strategies and ways to manage communication with the families. The attitude towards the families will condition the success in communication.
	Know and try to diminish expectations, projections and prejudice with an attitude of recognition, trust, gratitude and rapprochement.
	Clear support from the institution of joint work and families' involvement. Clear measures and specific resources to promote sensitization, also as part of all teachers' permanent training and curriculum as well as for all the other personnel involved in education.
	Promote adequate spaces for personal contact , the involvement of both parts in the process, specific projects to work together , and the set up of " motor nucleus " that, depending on the moment, may bring people and efforts together.
	Furnish a specific space in the schools that makes contact with families easier , in an atmosphere of privacy, without interruptions, that favors a relationship of trust.
	Flexibility and availability to talk to the parents.
	Choose the most suitable moments to talk to the parents, without necessarily focusing on the negative aspects/results that most concern the teachers.
	From the very beginning establish the "rules" or relationship guidelines, making clear what you are expecting from the families and clearly request their collaboration and show appreciation for their participation.
	Promote shared commitments and responsibilities in those areas where joint work is necessary. Propose follow-up and specific goals after agreements.
	Use techniques of active listening (show interest, clarify, paraphrase, reflect, summarize, etc) and avoid advising, preaching, judging, disqualifying, etc.
	Acknowledge what the parents are trying to communicate to us , even though we don't agree with their views. This means we take their opinions into consideration and show respect for them.
	Use techniques of passive listening , that is, interested silence, expressions, gestures of receptivity and acceptance, always showing interest. Understand empathically , that is, trying to look at things from their point of view.
	Be firm regarding the topics and respectful towards people.

- The teams have to read the list and add any other issues that, according to their experience, might complete it.
- In the squares on the left they have to number the issues, according to the relevance they grant it in the relationship family-school. Number 1 would be the element that most helps to create a positive atmosphere of collaboration between the school and the families.
- Once this task is done, the participants proceed to explain positive experiences associated to the items that got higher values and that have had influence on their attitudes and strategies when dealing with the families.
- The class exchanges ideas, highlighting the strong points that help to achieve a good relationship.
- After the conclusions, the teams make a list of specific proposals to improve the involvement of the families in the school ("non-magic" potions). In order to help them with this task, they are handed out a copy of the following outline.

Proposals to improve family involvement in the school

1. Measures taken by the school ADMINISTRATION.
2. Action taken by the ADMINISTRATION BOARD TEAM.
3. What can the schools do to intensify parents participation in the SCHOOL COUNCIL?
4. How to achieve parents' active and positive participation in the LIVING TOGETHER COMMISSION?
5. TUTORS' performance with the families.
6. Actions taken by the PARENTS' ASSOCIATION.

After exchanging ideas, the lecturer gives back the summaries and proposes conclusions, encouraging discussion and going deeper into the topics in the analysis.

Analysis

- To include in the teachers' training courses the issues related to the relationship family-school. Teachers should persuade themselves of the need to dedicate time (useless to struggle against the sensation of work overload!!!). To put into actual practice what is usually said in the speeches about participation.
- To improve the processes of welcoming students and parents to the school.
- To improve communication skills and training of parents that lead the Associations. To promote training activities for parents in coordination with the Parents' Associations.
- To use the net to spread (adapted) information for the parents and to "win" them for the association movement.
- To use and build up personal relationships as a way to maximize the Parents' Associations participation and the activities they organize (more work to be done at the gates of the schools).
- To foster the relationship between teachers and parents and among families (activities plus creation or improvement of meeting places). More activities for parents and education professionals.
- To educate for social participation.
- To set up a service of cultural translators/mediators, according to the composition of the foreign student population, anticipating their needs.
- To include in the students' registration papers general information concerning the education system, the way the school works, participation organisms, administration board timetable to attend to the parents, Parents' Association timetables, regulations, services, such as, early morning students, canteen, library, guidance, etc. This basic information should be handed out in the students' native language, if possible.
- To help the families to access the school's web site and include specific information adapted to the different cultural backgrounds of the students.

- To foster children care services, so that parents can go to the meetings.
- To promote a flexible timetable associated to the participation of working parents, in order to achieve better communication between families and the school for the tutoring of their children.
- To provide the teachers with adequate counseling, concerning the techniques to deal with groups or strategies necessary for the interviews and meetings with the parents to address their tutor function.
- To apply the new technologies, so that parents can participate and access general information and academic performance of their children, even though they can't actually be there. To encourage this in both senses: family-school, school-family.
- To establish a pattern of periodical coordination (with the administration board teams) in order to exchange information with the Parents' Associations, and vice versa, to plan common activities, to cooperate in special events, etc.
- To bear in mind families participation when planning the school activities (Welcoming Plan, Living Together, Prevention and Follow-up of Absenteeism, Fostering Reading Habits, etc.), setting up specific objectives and activities, in accordance with the regulations, and taking into account the students' cultural diversity.
- To offer training to the representatives of the parents in the School Council, so they can become Conflict Mediators, if they want to.
- To promote activities for parents and children.
- To program performances (intercultural week or day, etc.) in coordination with the associations of gypsies and immigrants.
- To adapt the school's curriculum to cultural diversity and draw the institution nearer to the minority families.

Session 4: Communication skills in the family – school relationship

Justification

The students' education process requires that the relationship family-school is made visible through fluent communication. To improve communication and participation in the schools, a series of skills, abilities and resources are necessary to help and facilitate the relationship between both institutions. We were not born with these skills and perhaps we will never perfect them. However, skills, just as trades and hobbies, can be learned and improved.

Objectives

- To practice strategies and group work techniques with the families in the schools.
- To acquire the skills necessary to create a better relationship of cooperation between families and teachers.

Contents

- Interpersonal communication
- Definition of the working conditions with the families
- Creating a relationship with the parents
- Assertiveness

Activities/Time

- Open hand, closed hand – 90 mins.
- Creating a relationship – 45 mins.
- Active listening – 45 mins.
- Styles of communication – 30 mins.
- Assertive techniques – 30 mins.

Evaluation/Analysis

- Basic aspects of group work with parents.
- Proposal of strategies to improve the relationship school-family.

1. Open hand, closed hand

Objectives

- To increase communication skills in the work with parents.
- To work on the definition of the context (working conditions with parents).

Time: 90 minutes

- The lecturer asks the class to talk about the ideas, thoughts and emotions that come to their mind when they have to deal with families.

- The lecturer then hands out post-it notes to carry out an organized brainstorm session. The participants write down the "problems and difficulties I encounter when trying to communicate with parents".
- Each participant writes an idea on a post-it card, using concise phrases in capital letters. They can write as many ideas as they want.
- Meanwhile, the lecturer draws the following table on the blackboard.

Difficulty or problem	It's someone else's	It's mine	I could solve it by ...

- The participants stick the post-it notes on the blackboard (without showing the contents).
- The participants pick up a note, read it and answer the question, how can I improve this situation?, and writes the answer on the back of the note.
- The lecturer fills in the table with the participants' contributions.
- Another activity to try out would be to draw two hands, one open and one closed, each one on a single piece of paper. Each participant writes down in the open hand the skills he/she thinks he/she possesses regarding communication and relationship with families. In the closed hand (fist) he/she writes down the attitudes he/she thinks he/she should improve.

- They put all the hands on the floor in the center of the classroom.
- Then, the participants are asked to pick up a closed hand and find an open hand with the skill he/she needs. Once the owner of the open hand is identified, they sit together to discuss the best way to learn the skill that the other one lacks. "I'd like to know how you managed to learn that skill."
- The objective is to set up specific goals, minimum changes that can be revised, that might help him/her to improve in his learning of the skill.

Finally, the class is divided in groups of 4 or 5, and the lecturer hands out a copy of the following document:

ACTIONS THAT HELP OR DON'T HELP TO ACHIEVE A CLEAR DEFINITION OF THE CONTEXT IN THE SCHOOLS (Source: Jesús Bernal Hernández)

1. Having a conversation with the parents in the corridor	<input type="checkbox"/> IT HELPS <input type="checkbox"/> IT DOESN'T
2. Making an appointment with certain parents through a third party.	<input type="checkbox"/> IT HELPS <input type="checkbox"/> IT DOESN'T
3. Summoning both parents all the time.	<input type="checkbox"/> IT HELPS <input type="checkbox"/> IT DOESN'T
4. Making a calendar with the parents that indicates the dates for individual and group tutoring.	<input type="checkbox"/> IT HELPS <input type="checkbox"/> IT DOESN'T
5. Providing the parents with a copy of this calendar at the beginning of the course.	<input type="checkbox"/> IT HELPS <input type="checkbox"/> IT DOESN'T
6. Summoning the grandparents that look after the student to come to the interview with the student's mother.	<input type="checkbox"/> IT HELPS <input type="checkbox"/> IT DOESN'T
7. For specific cases, designing a calendar of interviews with parents.	<input type="checkbox"/> IT HELPS <input type="checkbox"/> IT DOESN'T
8. Leaving the date for the following interview open.	<input type="checkbox"/> IT HELPS <input type="checkbox"/> IT DOESN'T
9. Letting the janitor know when parents are expected, so he/she can accompany them to the interview room/office.	<input type="checkbox"/> IT HELPS <input type="checkbox"/> IT DOESN'T
10. Waiting for the parents in the entrance hall and show them into the interview room.	<input type="checkbox"/> IT HELPS <input type="checkbox"/> IT DOESN'T
11. Dedicating the interview more than an hour.	<input type="checkbox"/> IT HELPS <input type="checkbox"/> IT DOESN'T
12. Taking advantage of the fact that the parents are in the school, the Principal knocks on the door to let them know he wants to talk to them about a certain incident.	<input type="checkbox"/> IT HELPS <input type="checkbox"/> IT DOESN'T
13. The Principal takes a seat and starts talking about the incident.	<input type="checkbox"/> IT HELPS <input type="checkbox"/> IT DOESN'T
14.	<input type="checkbox"/> IT HELPS
15.	<input type="checkbox"/> IT DOESN'T
16.	<input type="checkbox"/> IT HELPS
17.	<input type="checkbox"/> IT DOESN'T

The class exchanges ideas, and the lecturer encourages the discussion and goes deeper into the topics in the analysis.

Analysis

Basic issues when dealing with parents

- The basic starting point is to "consider in a positive way" parents' contributions in any field of work. Defining the context, creating the relationship, structuring of the problem and the solutions.
- The first two aspects involve actions that every teacher should carry out and for which it will be necessary to develop personal skills and attitudes.
- The other two aspects (and others, more specific ones, such as, follow-up and periodical evaluation) belong to the qualified professionals' field of work, that is, counselors, specifically trained to deal with parents in the most appropriate way.

Defining the context

- Actions: Always summon both parents. Facilitate their attendance to the meetings/interviews. Welcome them personally when they arrive at the school, or else, let the janitor know about it. Carry out the interview in an appropriate place, comfortable and private. Clearly

explain the purpose of the interview. Mark the limits of the school's working context and the issues derived from it. Ask for parents' explicit collaboration. Explain and specify future interviews: how many interviews, how long they will take, dates, etc. Use assertive and empathic techniques.

2. Creating the relationship

Objectives

- To create a relationship with the parents, so they can collaborate with us in the future, within the school's context.

Time: 45 minutes

- The class is divided in groups of 4 or 5 participants, and the teams are handed out a copy of the following document:

Write a reply for each of the following comments, in such a way that the parents feel the teacher is "returning" a standardization, a validation of feelings, a redefinition, or an attribution of resources (Source: Jesús Bernal Hernández).

PARENTS SAY...	I STANDARDIZE	I VALIDATE	I REDEFINE (I pose the problem in solvable terms)	I ATTRIBUTE RESOURCES
"Many times I feel terrible, especially when I lose patience with my son and I slap him ..."				
"I don't know how to help my daughter, she just clams up and there's no way of talking to her ..."				
"It's all my fault ..."				
"I'd take my son out and, if I could, I'd buy him ..."				
I can't help my son with his English ..."				

After exchanging ideas, the lecturer draws conclusions, encouraging the discussion and going deeper into the topics in the analysis.

Analysis
Creating the relationship

- Actions: relationship as attention = listening to the parents. Non-verbal behavior (eye contact, nodding, empathic gestures, physical approach). Verbal behavior (questions, summaries, mirror answers, complete an answer). Relationship as understanding = showing interest. Relationship as positive consideration = parents have resources.

General strategies to deal with parents from the school context

- Include the parents when *defining the context* of any homework.
- Provide the parents with information.
- Attend to parents demands, regarding the specific school project.
- Specify the kind of help parents are expected to give.

- Specify and plan the calendar for joint activities.
- Skills and attitudes that the teachers and school staff should exercise in order to work with the parents: eye contact, listening, summarizing, understanding, validating feelings, redefining, standardizing, attributing resources and considering them in a positive way.

3. Active listening

Objectives

- To put into practice strategies and techniques of intervention with the families in the schools.
- To acquire skills in order to create a better relationship of cooperation between families and teachers.

Time: 45 minutes

- The lecturer hands out a copy of the document to each of the participants:

ACTIVE LISTENING TECHNIQUES

(Fuente: Silvina Funes Lapponi)

Techniques	Objective	Procedure
Showing interest	1. To communicate interest 2. To encourage the other to speak	Don't express agreement or disagreement Use neutral words
Clarifying	3. Explain everything clearly 4. Get more information 5. Help them to consider other points of view	Ask questions Ask people to clarify what you didn't understand
Paraphrasing	6. Show that we understand what's being said 7. Verify the meaning	Repeat basic facts and ideas
Reflecting	8. Show that you understand how they feel 9. Help the other person to become aware of what he/she feels	Reproduce the speaker's feelings
Summarizing	10. Review how much progress has been achieved 11. Link important facts and ideas	Repeat the main facts and ideas

A few guidelines to bear in mind:

- Avoid talking about oneself.
- Avoid changing the subject.
- Avoid advising, diagnosing, reassuring, cheering up, threatening, preaching, criticizing, harassing.
- Avoid teaching lessons, ordering, consoling, approving or disapproving, interpreting or being ironical.
- Avoid being sarcastic, ridiculing, disqualifying, or underestimating towards the interlocutor or his/her feelings.
- Avoid getting ahead of what the other person wants to express.
- Avoid ignoring or denying the other person's feelings.
- Avoid faking you understood what indeed you didn't.
- Ask about their needs, concerns, anxieties, difficulties, impressions, points of view, etc. However, the goal is to make communication easier; not to conduct a cross-examination.
- After the corresponding explanation of the task, the class is divided in teams of 4 or 5 participants to work on the following document, trying to apply all the techniques mentioned above.

ACTIVE LISTENING PRACTICE LIST (Torrego Seijo, J. C. [coord], Mediación de conflictos en instituciones educativas. Manual para la formación de mediadores. Ed. Narcea, 2000, Madrid.)

Situations	Clarifying	Paraphrasing	Reflecting
"That guy's an idiot. Why does he make me repeat the exercise?"			
"My mother keeps telling me to be responsible. I'm fed up with her."			
"I don't have any friends at school. Nobody likes me."			
"Pepe is a pig. He's all the time painting on the desks."			
"He's staring at my girlfriend all the time. I'm sick and tired of it."			

After exchanging ideas, the lecturer encourages the discussion and goes deeper into the topics in the analysis.

Analysis

- Listening is also a passive skill, that is, it is also interested silence or nods or gestures of acceptance and receptivity, always showing interest. In addition, it means to understand empathically, that is, putting oneself in somebody else's shoes.
- The acknowledgement of what the other person says does not necessarily mean we agree with him/her but, rather, that we take his/her opinion into account and, therefore, show respect for his/her opinions.
- A participant in active listening constantly ponders the information received, in order to make sure that it is coherent with information already available, whether it comes from common general knowledge, or from specific visual data or from what has been said previously.

4. Styles of communication

Objectives

- To put the assertive style of communication into practice.

Time: 30 minutes

The lecturer hands out the following document:

STYLES OF COMMUNICATION CHART

(From Skills and Techniques for Group Work with Youth, by Rosemarie S. Morganette, 1995, Martínez Roca, Madrid)

Being passive means:

Avoiding to say what you think, feel, or want:

- Because you're afraid of having to face unwanted or annoying consequences;
- Because you don't believe in your own personal rights;
- Because you don't know how to express them;
- Because you consider other people's rights more important than yours.

Being aggressive means:

- Saying what you think, feel, or want without respecting other people's right to be treated respectfully.

Being assertive means:

Saying what you think, feel, or want:

- Without impairing other people's right to be treated respectfully;
- In an honest, non-threatening, open way;
- Respecting your own personal rights.

The participants are asked to complete the following phrases in first person:

I MESSAGES

1. You are at a party. Your friend has drunk too much. He insists on taking you home in his car.

When you
 I feel
 Because
 I'd rather

2. In a teachers' meeting, a colleague expresses her opinion, contrary to yours, regarding the elimination of the I.T. post.

When you
 I feel
 Because
 I'd rather

3. When you're about to leave the school, you go to the teachers' room to pick up your notebook and you see that one of your colleagues is reading it.

When you
 I feel
 Because
 I'd rather

4. It's 13:35 and you go into the last class of the day. The students don't seem to be prepared to be quiet and you need silence in order to begin.

When you
 I feel
 Because
 I'd rather

After exchanging ideas, the lecturer draws conclusions, encouraging the discussion and going deeper into the issues in the analysis.

Analysis

BEHAVING IN AN ASSERTIVE WAY MEANS:

- Using appropriate non-verbal language
 - Keeping eye contact with the person you're talking to
 - Maintaining an erect posture, as you speak
 - Talking in a clear, firm, audible tone
 - Avoiding complaints, apologetic notes and threatening phrases
 - Using body language and faces to emphasize your words
- Expressing firmness when maintaining your standpoint
- Respecting the other person's rights
- Making pacts
- Being firm regarding the topic and respectful towards people
- Making your own decisions
- Being self-confident
- Talking in first person
- Making and accept criticism
- Empathizing with the other person's needs, but maintaining your own

5. Assertive techniques

Objectives

- To learn and use different assertive techniques

Time: 30 minutes

Layout

- The lecturer hands out a copy of the following document:

TECHNIQUES THAT HELP TO CREATE AN ASSERTIVE STYLE

These techniques allow us to maintain an assertive style of communication, without being manipulated or infuriated by others, but also without being aggressive or passive.

1. **GROOVED RECORD:** A technique that, by means of a serene repetition of the messages, again and again, shows persistence as the right response, without having to repeat the same reasoning over and over again.
2. **BANK OF FOG or SPACING OUT:** This technique allows us to accept criticism, admitting a part of truth in it, but without giving up our own assertive right to be our own judge. "You might be right and perhaps we'd have to..." "If you say so..."
3. **FEASIBLE DEAL:** This technique consists in offering our interlocutor an option to his/her demand, a feasible deal, but without waiving our rights. "What do you think if I help you to... and, in turn, you....?"
4. **LOOKING FOR HELP:** This means that you must look for personal protection, if you feel you're in danger: shout, seek shelter in a shop, call the police, etc.
5. **GETTING AWAY FROM A SITUATION of risk or danger:** walk away fast, get out of the place immediately, "run off pell-mell"...
6. **DEVELOP YOUR SELF-ESTEEM** speaking and accepting words of flattery.
7. **STRESS CONTROL TECHNIQUES:** relaxation, etc.

In pairs, and using the assertive style, respond to each of the following negative and positive situations, applying the techniques mentioned above

Situation	Technique used
A colleague wants to borrow my cell-phone.	
A parent shows disrespect, making fun of my aptitude as a teacher.	
The parents of an 8 th grade student have filed a complaint against one of my colleagues, regarding the student's marks, and she asks me for help, but I have an urgent appointment with the doctor.	
The parents' representative at the School Council asks me about the high rate of failures in a colleague's class, in comparison with the results obtained by students in other groups, with other teachers.	
The principal congratulates me for the study I made of the proposals to improve absenteeism in the school.	
I get very nervous when the inspector shows up to review my planning.	

After exchanging ideas, the lecturer encourages the discussion and helps to go deeper into the topics in the analysis.

Analysis

- Assertiveness is a key component of social competence.
- When people are assertive, they learn to express and defend their ideas and feelings with greater precision.
- Assertiveness is a part of interpersonal communication, insofar as it shows a balance between

personal expression of feelings and thoughts and social adequacy.

- Just as any other kind of social behavior, it is regulated by the context (characteristics of the situation).
- This skill cannot be used when people try to defend their own interests, without any due respect for their interlocutor, and his/her opinions, feelings or ideas.
- The main challenge is to defend our own interests and opinions, without putting down the opponent in the conflict.

Session 5: Strategies for joint participation

Justification

Schools and families do not always follow the same path. Both of them often ignore the fact that there are certain strategies that can help them to make a plan to follow a joint route. Once the bases and necessary skills to improve communication and participation of the families in the schools have been set up, it is essential to take one more step ahead, establishing proper channels that help families from a different cultural background to fully integrate in the schools.

Objectives

- To organize the participation-oriented group work so that the students and their families integrate in the school dynamics.
- To learn strategies that make family participation easier, from an intercultural perspective.
- To clarify and value the presence of intercultural mediators in the schools.

Contents

- Intercultural environment in the schools.
- Resources that improve the integration of students from different cultural backgrounds.

Activities/Time

- Welcoming students and families at the schools. 90 minutes
- Cultural shocks. 60 minutes
- Intercultural relations. 60 minutes

Evaluation/Analysis

- Analyzing the challenges posed by intercultural exchange.
- The school as a space for learning.
- Proposals for integration.

Welcoming at the schools

The way one people welcome each other corresponds to hospitality attitudes and guidelines traditionally practiced by many cultures, including our own culture not very long ago. We understand the concept of welcoming others as a human attitude inherent to the educational fact. The Welcoming Plan deals with the subject from a very specific perspective of diversity.

Objectives

- To organize the participation-oriented group work so that the students and their families integrate in the school dynamics, using certain proceedings, so that the school (organization, curriculum, teachers) can get to know different family situations, immigrant or non-immigrant, and adapt to them as smoothly as possible.

Time: 90 minutes

The lecturer goes over the objectives of the session and then reads the following testimony:

»Yes, I arrived and felt embarrassed, because I went in on my own... there was nobody there, I didn't know anybody... they just said, "just go up those stairs and the classroom is there"... I don't know what else... "Go in and do what you can"... And there I was, scared... exams, first thing... that I had no idea what they were about. That's what impressed me most, that you get there and they give you a sheet to determine your level of... I don't know what... your IQ, or something... and I didn't understand... anything of what was going on...« (Educaweb 2008)

The class is divided into teams of 4 or 5 participants and they are handed out a copy of the following questions, concerning the WELCOMING PROCESS.

Welcoming process

- What is a good welcoming in the school community?
- What are the guidelines to carry out a good welcoming process?
- What rights does a good welcoming have to guarantee?
- What obligations does a welcoming process confer us?
- What is the relationship between the welcoming process and the teaching and learning processes?
- What does welcoming mean for the education community?
- What role do feelings play in a welcoming situation?
- What's the importance of communication?
- What role does participation play in a welcoming situation?
- What role do teachers, personnel, students, parents play in the welcoming process?

Each team chooses a moderator and a secretary. The moderator is in charge of moderating the discussion, making sure that the topic is fully discussed in the time previously fixed, and that everybody participates in the discussion. The secretary is in charge of summarizing the points, writing down the conclusions, reading them out loud to obtain approval from the team and acting as the speaker.

- The lecturer suggests:
 - 10 minutes to think about the questions, and synthesize in one phrase the main idea or essential answer to each question.
 - 30 minutes for group discussion, trying to agree on the answers.

– 20 minutes to think and write down how the **process of family welcoming** is going to be carried out in the school, considering all the elements: proceedings, timing, personnel in charge, and tools for the purpose.

- The speakers exchange conclusions and give the lecturer a copy of the sequencing they have planned for the welcoming process. The lecturer will then prepare a synthesis of the teams' contributions and give a copy to all the participants in the next session.
- After exchanging ideas, the lecturer gives back the summaries to the participants, proposes conclusions for further discussion and goes deeper into the issues in the analysis.

Analysis

- Welcoming students and their families is one of the many strategies used in an including school. The characteristics of an including school are: a physical and social atmosphere of inclusion, services to support inclusion, and parents' involvement.
- Welcoming is a qualitative element of incorporation and requires attention, comprehension, involvement, affection, etc.
- Every welcoming process has to begin by, first of all, approaching to the social, cultural, educational and psychological circumstances that the students and their families live in.
- Welcoming is a process and an attitude oriented to work on issues such as, personality, strength, empathy, trust, etc. Welcoming should reinforce resilience aspects.
- Welcoming should be understood as a strategy, as a first step taken in the schools towards setting up the foundations of an atmosphere of collaboration and understanding the moment the student and his/her family is living in.
- The welcoming process is over when the student stops being a stranger, when he/she is just one more classmate, another student at school, when the school knows his/her needs and demands.

Principles

- To know and acknowledge the characteristics of the newcomers when they first arrive at school, focusing on what we share with them, rather than on what makes us different.
- Work out welcoming strategies adapted to the school's conditions and availability.
- Apply standardization and equal opportunities, starting from a positive assessment of the students and their families.
- Initiate a level of knowledge diagnosis as the basis for an individualized plan of learning, if necessary.

Scopes

Family: To promote communication and family participation in the schools.

Social: To facilitate the creation and development of the students' cultural and linguistic identity throughout the socialization process.

Training: Welcoming should be a part of the students' learning process (learning to be, learning to live together).

- Set up a specific procedure to welcome the students and their families. A team of teachers should be appointed to be in charge of welcoming the students and the parents. The team knows the routine and is trained to carry it out properly.
- It would also be a good idea to have a member of the Parents' Association, so that he/she can highlight the kind of participation dynamics of the school and the support the Association can give to the newcomers.
- In case of cultural or linguistic difficulties, the presence of a parent that volunteers to play the role of "family guide" would also be very helpful.
- Make posters or signs in the different languages spoken in the community, for example, a big, WELCOME poster in several languages.
- In case of new incorporations, the welcoming should take place in a private, cozy area, trying to achieve communication with the student and his/her family. If necessary, try to find an interpreter that speaks the newcomers' language, a professional within the school or somebody familiar with the school system.
- Spend the necessary time with the newcomers in the first interview. Being in a hurry does not help to create empathic bonds.
- The first interview should follow an informal tone, knowing what sort of information we can gather at this point.
- The objectives of the first interview with newcomers are to gather information that allows us to place ourselves in the family context and to offer the basic information so that the newcomers feel comfortable in their new school context.
- Clearly let them know that education in this country is obligatory (including extra-curricular activities) and hand out school calendars (vacation time, festivities) and timetables.
- Explain the services offered by the school, such as, canteen, library, sports, etc. Inform them about the possibility to obtain scholarships, grants, or other subsidies to have lunch at school or buy books.
- Explain the educational services offered by the school, such as, guidance, counseling, psychopedagogue, classroom for students that need extra classes to catch up, welcoming area, etc.
- Hand out a list with the material the students have to bring to school.
- Give them a copy of the school's internal regulations and explain their function.
- Encourage verbal and non-verbal messages of welcome, understanding, pleasantness, solidarity, etc.
- Value the social, academic and linguistic background of the students, as well as their needs (social, emotional, etc.).
- Appoint a classmate as "student guide" to show the school to the newcomers.
- Prevent his/her feeling lonely when settling in the classroom, in the yard, in class, etc.
- Adapt the learning pace and the activities to the newcomers. Do not demand the same performance from the very beginning.

- Give him/her time to make friends, speak the language, take his/her own initiatives.
- Help him/her to express his/her feelings in an appropriate way.
- Develop a sense of humor and tolerance towards frustration.
- Verbally express self-confidence and tutor's trust in the student.
- Highlight successful performance to restrain stressing situations.
- Clarify the rules of relationship, rights and obligations.
- Help them to become aware of the experience they are living.
- Set goals that can be achieved.
- Help them to make a project that requires personal effort and results vitally satisfactory.

1. Cultural shocks

Culture is the environment where the person develops, the expression of life in all its aspects. Culture has been symbolically defined as "the water where the person-fish swims", covering us, determining our movements, allowing us to survive. Culture is a communal process, as well as dynamic, adaptable, changing, constantly redefining itself, due to the influence of other cultures and its own evolution.

Objectives

- To identify the components of a culture.
- To understand the differences and similarities between cultures.

Time: 60 minutes

The lecturer draws the following sketch on the blackboard:



- Culture is like an iceberg, only a small percentage of its mass is visible. The greatest part of it is beyond our conscience. The lecturer asks the participants to point out the visible elements of a culture (fine arts, literature, theater, music, dances, games, gastronomy, clothing, way of life, etc). The elements beneath the surface make up the "hard core" or invisible part of the culture. These are the cultural elements that determine and control our daily behavior, way of thinking and emotions. However, they do not show at a conscious level (concept of beauty, styles of courting, education ideals, laws of lineage, concept of modesty, cosmology, eye contact, body language, grimaces, importance of friendship, rapport with animals, models of relationship with superiors/subordinates, concept of justice, conflict solution, notion of adolescence, conversation models in different social contexts, work pace, functions associated to social age rank, sex, social class, work, etc.).

- **Cultural shocks** are produced when a sign has a different meaning in two societies. Some of the most common conflict issues are:
 - a) The concept of household space, rules, roles, etc.
 - b) The concept of daily time.
 - c) Role and status performance:
 - The family: concept and performance
 - The notion of person
 - The role of different social and age groups: youth, women, teachers, priests, etc.
 - Corporal punishment
 - d) Codes for living together:
 - Religion as a defining element of which matters are public or private, and the relations derived from this.
 - Gifts
 - The dead
 - Old age
- The lecturer divides the class in teams of 4 or 5 participants and hands out a copy of one of the **critical incidents** below. After reading them, the teams analyze the events narrated in the text, pointing out the **cultural shocks** and where they detect them.

CRITICAL INCIDENTS

(Source: Nuria Llevot Calvet)

Incident A:

A woman in charge of a training service for foreign telecommunications technicians in Paris relates the following incident:

"I invited some Indonesians over to my place for dinner. It was the Ramadan month. I also invited some French friends and told them to be there around seven, but I wasn't very precise as I was familiar with the Indonesians' concept of time.

The Indonesians arrived after three to cook a typical Indonesian dinner. They were fasting. After their fast ended, my French friends hadn't arrived yet. The Indonesians went to my bathroom and did their ablutions and, afterwards, went into my bedroom (there are only two rooms in my flat, it's

only about 50 square meters). They scattered some newspapers on the carpet and said their prayers. Then, they started eating without waiting for the other French guests.

I really wasn't expecting this, as I thought they could wait a few minutes. I was very annoyed at their imposing their own behavior on the rest. I never thought they would have the nerve to do their ablutions and praying in my own house. I'm not a believer."

Incident B:

A social worker from a refuge for immigrants tells us the following case:

"I make an appointment to meet a Senegalese at his place to discuss a housing problem, but he's not there when I arrive. In turn, a bunch of younger brothers and friends were expecting me, including a marabou.

They tell me I have to talk with them. I say no, I'll wait for him. However, when he arrives we never get to the point. He walks me to the bus stop and we arrange to meet another day."

Incident C:

"Two of us, street educators, members of an association that shelters immigrants, go to a village to visit two Moroccan families. We had arranged to meet at 8pm in a house where men from two different houses and that live alone usually get together. The appointment with the other family was at 9pm. We arrive at the first house and there's nobody there. A bit later we find out that all the men were waiting for us in the other house. So, we go to the other house.

We arrive at the second house a little ahead of the fixed time, and they seem a bit baffled. They

immediately serve coffee and we discuss a work offer. Then they serve a cup of tea. We try to leave, but they tell us to wait, they're making us supper. Time elapses and supper isn't ready. We decide to go for a walk and we promise them we'll be back for supper, after saying hello to all of them.

When we go back to the first house, they are angry because they had made us some cous-cous and we hadn't shown up. We didn't know how to apologize. We were also angry because they hadn't waited for us, in the first place."

Incident D:

This happened to two Spanish girls in a small village in Turkey, during a trip that was part of their studies. They were taken in as lodgers by a Turkish family made up of a young married couple and the mother of one of the spouses. At suppertime, the Spanish girls were shocked because the women were serving the food, but they didn't eat. They didn't sit at the table, they just bent down to eat. The girls were puzzled to see a young married couple behaving like that

and that the woman hadn't made any progress.

The second shock came when one of the girls wanted to take a picture of the house and the women. The husband refused, "No, no pictures of the women, only me." At that point, the Spanish girl reacts abruptly and says, "I'm not taking any pictures, then." She was totally outraged with such macho behavior and the fact that young people were still into it.

Incident E:

"This is about a young Moroccan girl who is attending some group training course. When the social educator visits her home, her mother tells her that every time her daughter gets home late at night, the next morning, she takes her to the gynecologist to find out whether she's still a virgin. As the results of the analyses always show

that she is still a virgin, her mother does not trust her daughter, the doctors, or the reports, so she takes her to a different one every time. In addition, when the girl gets home late, she suffers all sorts of corporal punishment. The educator is astonished and does not know what to say to either of them."

Incident F:

"In Nigeria we met John, a Nigerian doctor, orthopedist and rheumatologist, through the general manager of Michelin in this country, a Frenchman. John had studied in Liege and often went back to Belgium to update his knowledge in his field. He even spoke with a Liege accent.

He talks about the problems in his country. He works at a clinic where the electrogen group doesn't work, surgical operations are performed by candlelight, surgical material is very expensive and always insufficient. He wants to leave his country because he's sure the government is plundering it, there's no research and the means are ridiculous.

We got along very well with John. He often came to our house for supper, but when he was expected to arrive at eight-thirty, he usually showed up at eleven-thirty or midnight. As a rule, we organized these dinner parties to introduce him to Europeans that could be helpful to him. However, he's always late for the appointments. Once I came back from South Africa and I told John about the hospital I had seen in Boraliwana (Soweto), the largest and most modern in the area. Indeed, we have a friend from Antwerp who

works in the cardiology service there and another one from Zaire, Dr Kalonji, who also works there.

I write to Kalonji and also phone him and tell him about John. It's worth mentioning that South Africa and Nigeria had cut off relations at that time. Therefore, in order to make a phone call, one had to speak through an Italian phone service. As we didn't have a phone, we had to spend four or five hours at a friend's to make those phone calls. Finally, Kalonji tells me there's an opportunity for John to work at that hospital, as his C.V. has impressed them. The Michelin general manager and I organize another phone call. John shows an hour and a half late, but thanks to the cell phone, we manage to get through to Kalonji.

Everything seems to be going well. John is very happy. »He was finally going to be able to dedicate himself to curing others!«, he says. He also mentions a Belgian girlfriend that doesn't want to come to Nigeria, but she wouldn't mind going to South Africa, (John is 45 and he always shows up with different women). He would also like to get away from his family, in fact, he has to support several relatives.

Everything seems to be working out fine. The general manager fixes his papers. Right then, John disappears. Kalonji calls us again, and nothing. I felt like a fool. I saw John four or five months later. I was very angry and I told him so. After going totally out of my way... I'd never do anything like that again. I couldn't understand his attitude at all. He was the one who had asked us for help. He said that his mother was ill and needed to find a good doctor. »You are a doctor. Why don't you

look after her yourself?« He said he had to stay to take care of his family and that it was difficult to leave behind so many friends, both Nigerian and European.

I had the impression that he was fooling me with false excuses. After leaving Nigeria, I've never made the slightest attempt to see him again, even though I know he often comes to Belgium. Nevertheless, he had become a close friend. Even though he never invited me to his house."

After exchanging ideas, the lecturer hands back the summaries, draws conclusions and encourages further discussion, going deeper into the issues in the analysis.

Analysis

The lecturer starts the debate posing the following questions:

- How do we shape our cultural identity? In a multicultural and interdependent world, is it important to recognize the cultural components that define each group? Can we develop a cultural identity including elements of diverse origin? Is the crossbreeding process enriching?
- Relating to a cultural group is a process that requires the possibility of free choice in a situation of equality and social justice.
- If people develop the ability to distinctly express the components of their reference culture (or cultures) and analyze them critically within a certain historical context, they will begin to become aware that it is the individuals that define, remake and transform culture.
- Cultural identities are dynamic and constantly changing, therefore, conflicting, but, nonetheless, enriching.

2. Intercultural relations

Intercultural relations are established through an interaction based upon respect for diversity and mutual enriching. However, the process is not free of conflicts. The conflicts are solved with respect, dialogue and listening to each other. The intercultural proposal poses a challenge to all social institutions, from the family to the enterprise and public administrations, which should open up and acknowledge diversity (cultural diversity, among other aspects), without avoiding discussion of the barriers and structural inequalities encountered in our social order.

Objectives

- To learn strategies that promote family participation from an intercultural perspective.
- To clarify and value the presence of intercultural mediators in the schools.

Time: 60 minutes

The lecturer hands out the following questionnaire and gives a few minutes for the participants to answer it.

FOR STARTERS ... (Fuente: José Manuel Baráibar López)**In the educational context, intercultural exchange should be**

- a) A possible response to cultural diversity.
- b) An objective to achieve through school group work.
- c) A strategy to achieve the integration of the immigrant students.
- d) A basic premise for the education of the people, for the people.

Which of the following actions do you think contributes best to encourage the participation of immigrant families in the schools?

- a) Offering the families clear and relevant information, translated into their own language, if necessary, concerning rules, demands, menus, marks, etc.
- b) Organizing educative family-oriented get-togethers with the aid of interpreters for those who don't speak Spanish yet.
- c) Promoting the participation of immigrant parents in the elections for the School Council, as candidates and/or voters.
- d) Encouraging family participation in the organization and implementation of an Intercultural Week, with exhibitions, concerts and tasting of typical dishes from the students' native countries.

As far as the organization of the school, which of the following initiatives do you think best promotes immigrant families participation in the school?

- a) Making tutorial and meeting timetables as flexible as possible, so that the families can attend when necessary.
- b) Rethinking the distribution of the school's space and time, so that families can meet, exchange ideas, and make informal contact among themselves and with the personnel in the smoothest way possible.
- c) Maintaining fluent coordination with the corresponding Social Services and other resources to facilitate the follow-up of families with children at risk of neglect or academic failure.
- d) Promoting family involvement in extra-curricular activities, during or after the usual school timetable, such as, workshops, collaboration in certain classes, academic reinforcement, etc.

Indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements:

The best strategies for intercultural education in a school are those that allow the different ethnical, national, religious, etc. identities present in the classrooms and in the school to become visible and recognizable.

1 2 3 4 5

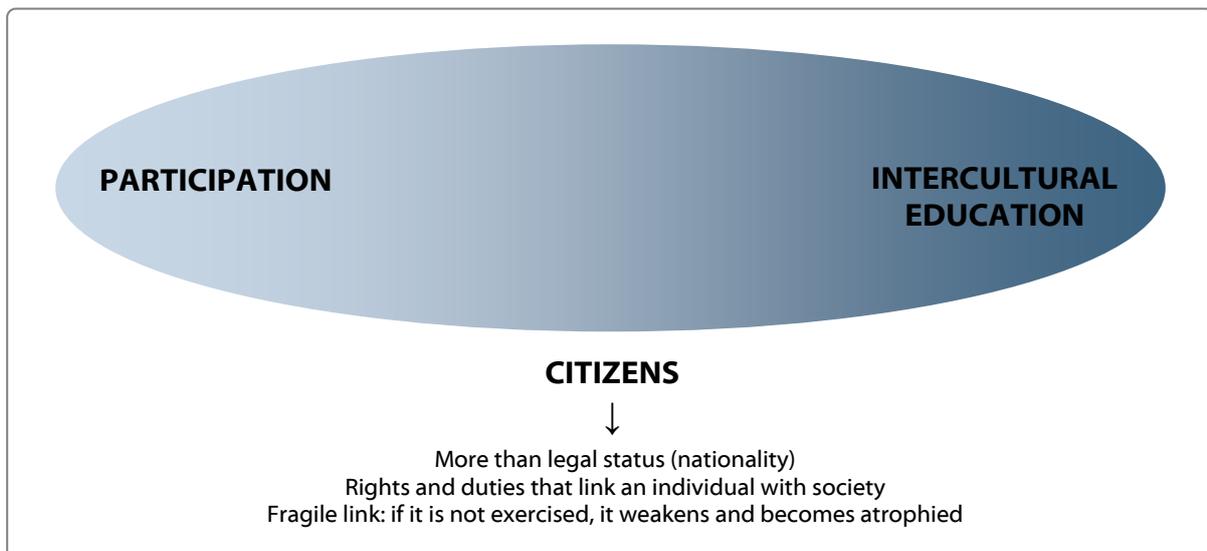
The key to family participation in the school is about ends, not means. If the reason WHY is clear, HOW to make it possible will immediately become clear too.

1 2 3 4 5

After exchanging ideas, the lecturer encourages further discussion and goes deeper into the issues in the analysis.

Analysis

- Intercultural exchange is not good enough as a reference framework:



- The school as the ideal space to learn and exercise citizenship: students, families, teachers, environment, etc.
 - The best strategies are the ones that look for the participation of all the members of the educational community, regardless of their origin.
 - Participation means: information, opinion, decision-making and collaboration and involvement in the execution of the decisions.
 - Difficulties to link theory and practice in intercultural education: the adaptation of the curriculum to cultural diversity and the approach between the educational institution and the minority families.
 - In the case of certain minorities (foreign immigrants that don't speak the language of the recipient country), it is essential to sponsor specific channels that help to overcome the barriers that stem from a lack of information and knowledge. One of the most feasible proposals is to make use or extend the use of **cultural mediators**.
 - Most likely, the teachers would value the mediators' work for what they may do to bring ethnical minorities close to the school, rather than what they can do to change or adapt the school to the demands and expectations of these minority families.
 - For the teachers, the mediator is a resource to appeal to when there is a situation that they are not prepared to undertake. Therefore, it would be convenient that the mediator were a person with adequate knowledge of the corresponding minority culture, and ample availability. The mediator would not necessarily have to be assigned to one or more schools as part of the professional personnel.
- Demands on the mediator:**
- Majority group:
 - Negotiation in conflicts of values (hiyabs, pork, henna, extra-curricular activities, certain subjects, etc.)

- Explanation and justification of the initiatives that don't fit in with the parents' traditions/ customs.
 - Low attendance to school, absenteeism, drop outs.
 - Family involvement in the school.
 - Family cooperation in the pre-registering and registering periods.
 - Translation.
 - Socio-cultural interpretation.
 - Counseling and escorting professional personnel.
- Minority group:
 - Economic subsidies
 - Social benefits
 - Conflict mediation
 - Communication breakdown
 - Counseling on available resources
 - Defense and promotion of minority rights and interests
- Personal support and reinforcement
 - Escorting and translation
- Three guidelines** to shape the educational institutions commitment:
- Active sponsoring of living-together, tolerance and respect towards the other in school, organizing talks and sensitization programs.
 - Involvement and participation in the school's decision-making procedures, attending meetings and collaborating with the tutors in their planning of activities, education projects, etc.
 - Forceful promotion of parents' participation in the schools, through the School Councils or Parents' Associations. In addition, not only the parents, but also the tutors and the administration should contribute to the transformation of the spaces and channels of participation, adapting them to the characteristics and interests of the different families.

Evaluation of the course “Practical activities”

In order to obtain information on the performance of this training course, please fill in the following questionnaire, indicating the punctuation allotted to each item.

(Lower punctuation 1, higher punctuation 5)	1	2	3	4	5
1. Fulfillment of objectives					
2. Contents covered					
3. Methodology					
4. Documentation handed out					
5. Applicability in the classroom					
6. Organization of the activity					
7. CFIE participation in the activity					
8. Personal satisfaction					

Assessment of lecturers:	Command of the contents					Adjustment to the program					Ability to communicate				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
LECTURERS															

Assessment of the participants:	1	2	3	4	5
1. Contributions, active participation					
2. Interest, involvement					

Observations, suggestions:

Improvements that could be made:

.....

.....

.....

What subjects would you like to be trained in?

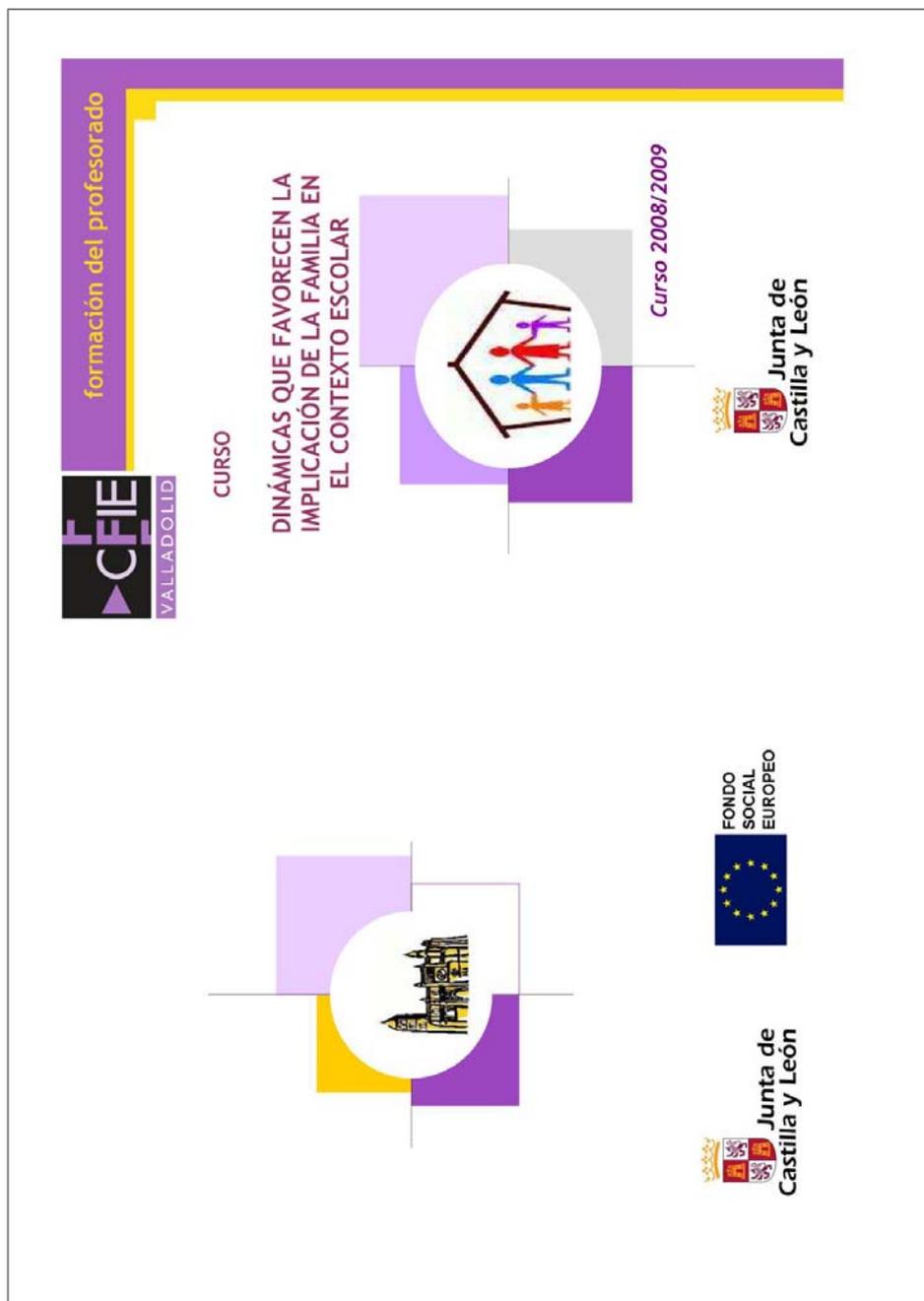
.....

.....

.....

Thanks you for your cooperation!

2.6.1 The family in the context of school (Flyer for a course programme)



<p>Justificación</p> <p>La participación de los diferentes actores que conforman la escena escolar es un derecho y un deber que garantiza una educación de calidad. a deseable interacción entre ambos sistemas, el familiar y el escolar, requiere tiempo, esfuerzos, formación e investigación. Con esta actividad formativa se pretende sensibilizar a los profesionales del ámbito educativo, respecto a la necesidad de reducir la distancia entre la escuela y las familias -con especial atención a las de origen inmigrante y minorías culturales-. Así mismo, busca analizar lo que supone la presencia, en los centros educativos, de este alumnado y la manera de abordar la nueva realidad que se presenta; y todo ello, plasmarlo en actuaciones concretas que logren una implicación positiva y real de madres y padres en la comunidad escolar, con el fin de que las oportunidades educativas de sus hijos mejoren y se incrementen.</p> <p>Objetivos</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprender el fenómeno migratorio y sus implicaciones en educación. • Reflexionar sobre las actitudes que genera el fenómeno migratorio y la comunidad gitana. • Facilitar la elaboración de propuestas de integración y sensibilización intercultural en los centros educativos. • Analizar las características de la familia actual y su incidencia en la educación. • Identificar y analizar las principales barreras en la relación familia- escuela. • Promover la utilización de estrategias generadoras de interacción entre escuela y familia. • Adquirir habilidades personales y profesionales para gestionar la competencia comunicativa con las familias. • Propiciar el intercambio de ideas y experiencias entre el profesorado. <p>Contenidos</p> <p>Los contenidos se organizan en los siguientes módulos:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CREACIÓN DE UN CLIMA POSITIVO • ASPECTOS SOCIOAFECTIVOS DE LA INTERCULTURALIDAD • LA RELACIÓN FAMILIA-ESCUELA • HABILIDADES DE COMUNICACIÓN EN LA RELACIÓN FAMILIA-ESCUELA • ESTRATEGIAS PARA LA PARTICIPACIÓN CONJUNTA <p>Destinatarios</p> <p>Profesionales del ámbito educativo relacionados con las familias (equipos directivos, departamento de orientación....)</p> <p>Criterios de selección</p> <p>1º.- Asistir dos personas del mismo centro, siendo uno de ellos miembro del Equipo directivo y el otro, profesor de Psicología y Pedagogía o de servicios a la comunidad.</p> <p>2º.- Atender al mayor número de centros.</p> <p>3º.- Si el número de solicitudes supera al de plazas, se realizará un sorteo público el día 4 de noviembre de 2008, a las 10:00 horas en el CFIE de Valladolid.</p> <p>Metodología y evaluación</p> <p>Los contenidos programados en el curso se desarrollarán mediante:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sesiones presenciales, en las que se combinarán: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exposiciones teóricas de contenidos y/o objetivos por sesión. - Actividades prácticas o dinámicas de grupo. - Análisis, evaluación y establecimiento de conclusiones. • Sesiones no presenciales: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trabajo individualizado o por grupos, de propuestas de intervención que mejoren la relación familia/centro educativo. Su realización se concretará en la primera sesión del curso. <p>Para la evaluación se tendrán en cuenta los siguientes indicadores:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asistencia y participación activa de los asistentes al curso. • Elaboración y presentación del trabajo de las sesiones no presenciales. <p>Para evaluar el funcionamiento y desarrollo de la propia actividad los asistentes cumplimentarán el cuestionario final.</p> <p>Inscripciones y lista de admitidos</p> <p>Las inscripciones se pueden realizar a través de la página web: http://www.cfievalladolid.es, hasta el día 3 de noviembre de 2008. La lista de admitidos se publicará el miércoles, día 5 de noviembre, en la página web del CFIE de Valladolid.</p> <p>Certificación</p> <p>El CFIE de Valladolid certificará 30 horas de formación, equivalentes a 3 créditos. Para tener derecho a la certificación se deberá asistir, al menos, al 85% de las horas presenciales según normativa vigente y realizar el trabajo propuesto.</p> <p>Número de plazas</p> <p>35</p> <p>Lugar de realización</p> <p>CFIE de Valladolid, C/ Soto, nº 62. 47010 Valladolid.</p> <p>Temporalización y horario</p> <p>Días 6, 11, 18, 20 y 25 de noviembre de 2008, de 17:00 a 21:00 horas.</p> <p>Ponentes</p> <p>Jordi Garreta Bochaca, Doctor en Sociología y profesor de la Universidad de Lérida. Josep Miquel Palaudrías Martí, Doctor en Pedagogía y profesor de la Universidad de Gerona. Nuria Llevat Calvet, Doctora en Psicopedagogía y profesora de la Universidad de Lérida. Julia Moreno Sánchez e Iria Álvarez Silva, Trabajadora Social y psiquiatra, respectivamente, del equipo de salud mental de Médicos del Mundo Aragón. Silvina Funes Lapponi, Profesora de la Universidad Carlos III de Madrid. Victoria Muñoz Garrido, Lcda. en Pedagogía y profesora de la U. Complutense de Madrid. Daniel Duque Virseda, Asociación ACCEM de atención y acogida a refugiados e inmigrantes. Alberto González Rodero, Fundación Secretariado Gitano. José Manuel Baráibar López, Lcdo. en Pedagogía y orientador del EDEP Puente de Vallecas (Madrid).</p> <p>Asesoría responsable de la actividad</p> <p>Asesoría de Convivencia: M^a Victoria Vian Barón y Francisca Manchado Pérez. Correos electrónicos: mvian@educa.jcyl.es y fmanchad@educa.jcyl.es</p>
<p>CENTRO DE FORMACIÓN DEL PROFESORADO E INNOVACIÓN EDUCATIVA DE VALLADOLID</p> <p>C/ Soto, 62. 47010 - Valladolid. Tel.: 983 260 650. Fax 983 260 666. Correo electrónico: cf2003@educa.jcyl.es. Página web: http://www.cfievalladolid.es</p>	