



Project Number 531028-LLP-1-2012-1-IT-KA4-KA4MP

## **School Safety Net**

### **Virtual Meeting on the Case Scenario Entitled**

### **"A Sum of Situations Leading to Early School Leaving"**

## **Minutes**

### **Participants:**

Rosario del Rey (Spain)

Marta Campos (Spain)

Lorenzo Martellini (Italy)

Domingos Santos (Portugal)

A group of teachers from Portugal (Conceição Vasconcelos, Alcino Silva, Helena Castro, Cidália Cordeiro and Isabel Ferreira)

Julien Keutgen

A group of teachers from Belgium (Georges Moussot, Alain Thonon, Françoise De Boeck, Nathalie Ruelle and Sandra Gérard)

### **Minutes**

The session opens at 5:00 p.m. CET welcoming to all of the participants and verifying that of the technical requirements are fulfilled.

Rosario del Rey starts speaking and presents the agenda of the virtual meeting to the participants. Additionally, she presents the conceptual key issues of bullying. The phenomenon is characterized as intentional aggressive behaviour repeated over time, and which involves an imbalance of power between aggressor and victim, as well as morally and ethically reprehensible conduct, continues to be a societal problem that affects school-age children. The bullying roles are important. Victims unable to defend themselves against these acts of abuse; aggressors intending to do harm; bully/victims reacting to an attack and in turn acting irresponsibly by showing the same level of impunity as their attackers; and bystanders observing behaviours that they can either silence or act upon, making their intentions known or protecting the victim in some way. Furthermore, personality variables that have proven relevant to the bullying phenomenon, such as self-esteem and empathy, are important differential components in both cyber-victims and cyber-aggressors. Likewise, albeit with nuances, both protagonists, victim and aggressor, exhibit emotional and psychological disturbances.

Once the key issues of bullying were synthesized, the case "A Sum of Situations Leading to Early School Leaving" was presented. A case in which in the frame of a bullying situation it is complex to differentiate if the protagonist of the story is a victim or an aggressor.

A gypsy youngster coming from a broken family started to have a very challenging and disruptive attitude. When he gets angry, often shows a "rage" or "anger". His classmates do not like that he always wants to have the reason and if they do not pay attention to him, he tries to get it, doing bad behaviors as stealing their belongings. Juan's classmates do not feel much attached to him. He feels alone.

Subsequently, the strategy is presented. It is as follows:

***The protagonist:***

He should improve his attitude towards his mates. Peers might also be a support to face adversity. However they also could be a focal point for exclusion, lack of comprehension and victimization when the reasons for maladjusted behaviors are neither understood nor identified.

***Classmates:***

They have to know something about his personal situation probably could try to help him. It is important that peers share group activities so he could interact with his classmates and have experiences that enhanced mutual knowledge.

***Teachers:***

One of the main axis must be that he experiences academic and social successful situations. It is necessary that he feels beloved, particularly by his mates. Therefore, the teachers must help him to improve his behavior.

***Parents:***

The parents must assume that Juan keeps being their son although they are no longer together and that must find the way to demonstrate him that they love him and that are willing to help when he feels without having friends or going nowhere.

***Headteacher:***

Awareness campaigns about peer support programs and empathy development could be carried out. Not only the protagonist could make use of them but also every boy or girl that faced a situation where there is feel of need or comprehension.

***School psychologist:***

The school psychologist establishes channels of communication with the parents so that they start considering the protagonist as their main priority and so that they begin to develop positive habits. In addition, a plan of action of the rest of the classmates should be included for gaining their support and recognition with the aim of making him feel better.

Later, the debate was opened.



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Marta, a Spanish teacher, comments that the most important intervention should involve the protagonist's family and peers.

María, a Portuguese teacher, states that the key would be to find an attachment figure for the protagonist. She doubts if this is a real case of bullying or not. In any case, she points out that the strategies could be improved by including programs about emotional development and cooperative work.

Domingos outlines that recurrence of this kind of situations is increasing every day in the schools. Accordingly, schools should be opened to the community, to the society. In this respect, it would be important to work with local projects regardless the kind of activity they are for: flamenco, football, etc. It is important to fill the gap between the school and the society.

For Julien, it is not clear who is the aggressor and who is the victim considering that the protagonist has an aggressive attitude.

Rosario explains that the premises for occurring a problem take place. However, she continues explaining that what it is intended is to show that the reality is more complex that it can be understood from the books. In occasions, there are victims that are also aggressors and this complicates even more the situation and, therefore, the educative response to be addressed.

Marta says that is normal that the protagonist's mates do not want to go with him due to his attitude. Therefore, it should be necessary to work with both, the protagonist and his mates.

María, insists in the need for a cooperative group.

Domingos explains that in Portugal social workers are involved in this kind of situations and get involved in the schools.

Julien proposes doing some improvements to the strategy.

## **Conclusion**

The case is complex but presents a realistic situation that is present in some of the schools of our environment. The strategy is adequate but can be improved by including activities aimed to open the school to the society, activities about emotional education, working in groups e insisting in the work with the family.

Meeting finalices at 17:59.