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# Collection of good practices

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## Best practice #1 - "NaturligVis på Koloni"

### 1. Name and data

<b>Name of initiative:</b>	<i>"NaturligVis på Koloni"</i>
<b>Name of implementing organization:</b>	Kolonierne - Københavns Lærerforenings Kolonier
<b>Type of implementing organization:</b>	Teacher association
<b>Country (region/municipality):</b>	Denmark, Copenhagen Municipality
<b>Year of good practice implementation and duration of the best practice (if applicable):</b>	2020-2022 (and continuing)
<b>Target group aimed at:</b>	Kids and youngsters (6–16-year-olds) during their summer holidays.
<b>Summary</b>	

### 2. Short description of the best practice (national context, goals, strengths)

The teacher association for Copenhagen Municipality has 29 colonies, which are used during summer holidays for 1-2 weeks summer camps for kids living in the municipality. Each year about 4.000 kids participate in these. The association has received a grant from the Novo Nordisk Foundation to develop "NaturligVis på Koloni". The project aims to support children's and young people's interest and curiosity for nature and science. Through practical experiences in nature, NaturligVis på Koloni strengthens children's and young people's understanding of their own role, as an integrated part of nature.

NaturligVis på Koloni consists of wide range of didactic cards, which are both digitally distributed and physically printed to be used at the camps. The cards are divided into 4: Activities, methods, questions, and 'knowledge cards' that can inspire, activate, and make young people wonder about what they see and experience in nature. The activity cards guide the kids in exploring nature and doing small experiments. All the cards can be seen as didactic bricks that support young people in being explorative and active. They can be combined in infinitely many ways both by the adults at the camps and the kids/youngsters themselves. Thus, "NaturligVis på Koloni" is an example of how flexible didactic bricks can be developed and communicated.

### 3. Implementation

The project has been developed and implemented by the organisation Foreningsudviklerne, who has worked closely with the teacher association for Copenhagen. They have involved educators and nature guides in the process, and they are now in the process of testing it to gain insights on how to improve it. They have received a lot of positive feedback from the staff working at the colonies, and they are have received funding to further develop the project to support school camps and through this the subjects taught at the schools.

The product consists of a website <https://kolonierne.dk/naturligvis/>, where the didactic bricks (activities, methods, questions, knowledge cards) can be found easily through a search function. They have also been printed and laminated and gathered in a wooden box that is distributed to each of the 29 colonies. Finally, the project provides the colonies with all kinds of gear to be used in connection with various activities and methods (e.g. fishing nets, water binoculars, and uv-lamps).

#### 4. Outcomes and impact

The fact that the various activities, methods, questions, and ‘knowledge cards’ aren’t put into fixed sequences for learning projects, but instead can be used individually or in combination with others, makes it much more useful – and gives the young people an opportunity to explore what they find interesting. The summer holidays are not school, and the intention has been to create a supporting set of tools that will not feel like school for the young people in growing their curiosity and interest in nature and science.

#### 5. Weaknesses / areas for improvement

The project team have found that teenagers are less likely to get involved, and thus they need to develop another approach for these age groups (12–16-year-olds). For the same reason they involved a group of teacher students in a weekend camp to get their ideas on how to reach out to this age group.

Another weakness is that the material is not designed to fit into the school’s curriculum but could easily be developed further to support various learning objectives. The teacher association’s aim is to further develop “NaturligVis på Koloni” to be used in schools as well. They have received more funding to support this development.

#### 6. Comments and/or other observations

There is a huge potential for creating a more flexible teaching and learning tool. It is easily accessible for educators and other staff at the colonies. However, they still need to see a lot of different examples on how to use the toolbox to develop their didactic fantasy and use it in various ways.

## Best practice #2 - Den Kreative Platform (The Creative Platform)

### 1. Name and data

<b>Name of initiative:</b>	<b><i>Den Kreative Platform (The Creative Platform)</i></b>
<b>Name of implementing organization:</b>	Aalborg University
<b>Type of implementing organization:</b>	University
<b>Country (region/municipality):</b>	Denmark (and partly internationally)
<b>Year of good practice implementation and duration of the best practice (if applicable):</b>	2006-2012 (-2022)
<b>Target group aimed at:</b>	All ages from 8 years and up, including Primary, Secondary, high school, vocational education, and higher education.
<b>Funded by:</b>	IDEA-Denmark, IDEA-Nord, Selvstændighedsfonden / Danish Foundation for Entrepreneurship, Erhvervs- & Byggestyrelsen (Danish Enterprise And Construction Authority)
<b>Summary</b>	

### 2. Short description of the best practice (national context, goals, strengths)

The Creative Platform originated from a series of educational-industry workshop experiments during 2006-2012. These experiments examined how to temporarily enhance creativity in groups. Most experiments were designed as 24–48-hour camps where 40-60 students/pupils worked on challenges defined by 4-5 companies. Students would work in groups of 4-6 to solve the challenges with new innovative solutions. It was the novel approach to facilitation of these groups that led to the concept and practice of The Creative Platform.

The Creative Platform is a paradigm for creating unlimited application of knowledge through facilitation and creative toolkits. It is a process for creative creation in groups. Through the creative process humans develop their ability to be themselves - thus freeing their commitment and ability to participate with all their knowledge, without restrictions of academic, social, or cultural character. The same process that leads to radical innovations, will enhance self-esteem and thus the joy of participation by each participant. Therefore, The Creative Platform can be used both for innovation, entrepreneurship, organisational development, product/service development, teaching creativity at all levels of education, creative teaching at all levels of education, cross cultural work, self-esteem development as well as complex problem solving - basically any task where groups should be creatively creating together.

The basic element of a creative process on The Creative Platform is the idea. An idea is a unique situation-specific representation of knowledge - and the process is to develop ideas on ideas on ideas until the solution, in the form of a product, project, procedure, an appointment, idea concept, a

technical understanding or course of action, is a reality.

The Creative Platform is an approach for teaching creativity and/or running creative processes. It is the idea of an ideal mental workplace for interdisciplinary, intersocial and intercultural groups. On the platform it is possible for professionals from all kinds of disciplines or cultural backgrounds to apply their knowledge for solving a common task/problem in unlimited ways. Therefore, The Creative Platform is a learning environment, where people apply their knowledge unlimitedly to create new knowledge constructions in terms of ideas for products, services, or new perspectives on their thinking.

The process on The Creative Platform and the work done on it always follow the same phases - no matter what the purpose might be:

1. Preparation for facilitating the process, composition of participants, physical frames and writing down a minute-by-minute program of the process
2. The Red Carpet is a ritual in which participants get onto The Creative Platform and have the motivation, concentration, and confidence to engage in the process
3. The problem/task is presented briefly and without professional/academic input of any kind
4. Idea development is where knowledge is applied unlimited in a creative generation and development of solutions for the problem/task
5. Professional/academic input is brought into the process when we have found a direction/an idea that we want to develop further
6. The Blue Carpet is a ritual in which participants are taken down from The Creative Platform and will be prepared for the ordinary world again

The process includes several 3D cases from the 3D Didactic. These exercises provide a change in behaviour and thinking of the participants needed on The Creative Platform. The 3D cases are context independent. A process consists of alternating between "3D case" – "Working on task/problem" – "3D case" – "Working on task/problem", and so on. Therefore, the 3D cases are only used to create a specific behaviour and way of thinking that is needed for the following step working on task/problem – a bit like a training before doing.

The entire process of The Creative Platform including 3D cases, the work on task/problem, the 6-phase model and everything else - are uncompromisingly following four fundamental principles:

- All participants have the same kind of thinking and behaviour at all times (parallel thinking)
- One should only focus on the task (task focus)
- There should be no experience of judgement (no-experienced judgement)
- Stimulating the use of all kinds of knowledge (horizontal thinking)

### 3. Implementation

The concept and practice of The Creative Platform is an open access and open source project. It was initiated by Søren Hansen and Christian Byrge at Aalborg University in the period from 2006-2012. However, several other have elaborated on the concept and on the practical material since then.

Find the concept and practical material for The Creative Platform below, including the 3D cases,



process guides, stimuli cards for idea production, and lots of instruction and theory videos.

- DANISH WEBSITE: <https://www.uva.aau.dk/den-kreative-platform>
- ENGLISH WEBSITE: <https://www.uka.aau.dk/The+Creative+Platform/>

There are no official numbers for where and by how many the concept and practice has been implemented. However, at least 600 teachers have participated in courses on how to implement The Creative Platform in schools.

#### 4. Outcomes and impact

This concept and practice make it easy for any teacher to structure and facilitate a creative process that makes it easy for the students/pupils to be creative together, and to be creative on a focused task/problem. The Creative Platform has several toolkits and has been elaborated into several subject specific applications that makes it easy to try out as a teacher. Especially the 3D cases are highly popular among teachers to facilitate short moments of creative interaction among the students/pupils. Some use these 3D cases as energisers. However, 3D cases are designed to develop creative skills and confidence, both temporarily and for long term.

#### 5. Weaknesses / areas for improvement

The Creative Platform concept may be a bit difficult for some teachers to comprehend. It has aspects that are rather philosophical that requires a strong dedication from the teachers to turn into applied learning experiences for the students/pupils.

The Creative Platform practice is easy to apply in classes. However, it is difficult to integrate this practice to existing learning systems and learning activities in standard class structures. As such, The Creative Platform risks becoming a separate learning activity. The students/pupils may not be able to re-use the tools and principles on their own without the facilitation from their teachers.

A next step improvement could involve an elaboration of The Creative Platform practice, so that it can be easier integrated into existing learning systems and learning activities. It should also include a "student/pupil" version of the process toolkit, so that it becomes easier for the students to apply The Creative Platform themselves during project work and other kind of students work.

#### 6. Comments and/or other observations

The Creative Platform practice gives a highly positive and energetic learning experience. It instantly initiates a creative atmosphere where fear of judgment slowly gets reduced. This has huge potential as a didactical framework for designing building bricks for a more creative and engaging learning experience in schools. Thus, the Creative Platform is an example of how generic didactic bricks can be distributed, used, and combined in various ways in relation to the teaching in schools.

## Best practice #3 - Action for Sustainability

### 1. Name and data

<b>Name of initiative:</b>	<b><i>Action for Sustainability</i></b>
<b>Name of implementing organization:</b>	&LEARNING
<b>Type of implementing organization:</b>	Private enterprise
<b>Country (region/municipality):</b>	Denmark and Greenland
<b>Year of good practice implementation and duration of the best practice (if applicable):</b>	2018-2023 (and ongoing)
<b>Target group aimed at:</b>	Teachers and headmasters at Primary and lower Secondary schools (pupils and students 6–16-year-old)
<b>Funded by:</b>	Municipalities and schools
<b>Summary:</b>	

### 2. Short description of the best practice (national context, goals, strengths)

Action for Sustainability is an action learning program supporting teachers in using creativity and sustainability as ways to motivate and empower the pupils to become change makers in their own lives – and for their surroundings and the world at large. The UN’s 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are used as a directory of real-world challenges for the pupils to work with and ‘design thinking’ as the method to structure an explorative and innovative learning process.

Action for Sustainability provides interdisciplinary teams of educators with a creative, structured, and facilitated workshop space to develop, perform, document, and disseminate new teaching projects, where the pupils create innovative solutions for the world while learning. The participating teacher teams go through an innovative learning process themselves, developing their competences to facilitate open-ended, creative, and student-driven learning projects.

The teams of teachers participate in a 3-day workshop, where they develop their learning project and receive feedback from other teachers as well as people from the outside. The teachers are introduced to and try out a lot of creative activities and methods during the workshop – to inspire them to use these with their own pupils, adjusted to their prerequisites. The activities come from various sources, one being The Creative Platform (see previous case description) and another being the book Innovative Elever (Innovative Pupils) that is written by Lilian Rohde. Half of this book is filled with concrete activities and methods that can be used in innovative learning projects.

After the development workshop, the teachers facilitate a 2-week long interdisciplinary learning project with the pupils. Later, the teacher teams meet for a half day workshop, where they document the learning projects in visual two-pagers that are uploaded in the program’s website: <https://aktionverdensmaal.net/english/>. The aim is to inspire other teachers and contribute to a

pedagogical sustainability in that the learning projects are shared and reused. Furthermore, the action learning approach aims to anchor the learning and engage the both teachers and pupils creatively, while learning. The substantiated assumption is that this anchor the learning more efficient, and contribute to the experience of meaning among the learners.

The overall ambition with Action for Sustainability is that pupils in Primary and Secondary education get to work as change makers and experience the many ways they can contribute positively to the 'greater good' of the outside world. It forms them as human beings and strengthens their innovative competences, all the while bringing knowledge from the traditional school subjects into play in meaningful ways. Over time the pupils will master the entrepreneurial process of acquiring, applying, and creating new knowledge, while working with real world challenges.

### 3. Implementation

Action for Sustainability was developed by &LEARNING in the last half of 2018 in the municipality of Frederiksberg in Denmark. The municipality supported the pilot version of the action learning program financially. Teachers from 4 schools participated in this. Since then, other municipalities in Greenland and Denmark have implemented the program. &LEARNING organises and facilitates the action learning process and conduct a one-day workshop as well as follow-up webinars with the head masters and pedagogical leads at the schools.

### 4. Outcomes and impact

Action for Sustainability has since the start been completed 11 times in 7 municipalities in Denmark and Greenland. More than 400 teachers and 4.000 pupils in 38 schools have taken part in more than 100 learning projects at the schools. In Greenland, Action for Sustainability mentors have been trained to support their colleagues in preparing for and performing innovative learning projects.

Headmasters at the schools have been given a one-day workshop with a design sprint to familiarise themselves with the didactic model, and they have been supported throughout the process to support the teachers practically and pedagogically. Thus, both headmasters, teachers, and pupils have undergone an innovative process with the aim to anchor the learning and innovative practices in a systemic, holistic, and sustainable way.

### 5. Weaknesses / areas for improvement

Action for Sustainability is very costly for schools and/or municipalities. Consultants needs to be hired, and teachers needs to be substituted for 3,5 days for participating in workshops. At the same time, the workload for the headmasters and/or coordinators at the municipality level is quite heavy to ensure a successful implementation. The interdisciplinary projects demand a lot of organising, because it differs from the everyday organization at the schools.

Although the ambition is to anchor the innovative methods and sustainability in the ongoing teaching practices, it has shown quite difficult for schools/municipalities to do so. Especially in making a transfer from inter-disciplinary projects to teaching in the individual school subjects.

For Action for Sustainability to be implemented successfully, it demands highly skilled and practically

experienced facilitators. Such facilitators are difficult to find. Thus, it is difficult to scale the program in its current format to professionally develop many more teachers.

Finally, the learning activities and methods that are used as part of the program are spread on many different platforms, books, etc. – and they are communicated in various ways. This makes it difficult for teachers to keep track of where they are located, and to use them and combine them.

## 6. Comments and/or other observations

During the Action for Sustainability workshops, it has been overserved that teachers are building up their learning projects with a lot of different activities and methods, coming from various sources. The idea for developing a didactic brick system is born out these observations – and from the ambition to make it easier for teachers to prepare for learning projects without a 3-day workshop. Interviews and surveys support the observation that gathering the activities and methods in a more flexible and modular system will make it much easier and less time consuming for teachers to prepare for innovative and engaging learning projects.

## Best practice #4 - Cooperative Learning

### 1. Name and data

<b>Name of initiative:</b>	<b><i>Cooperative Learning</i></b>
<b>Name of implementing organization:</b>	Cooperative Learning DK ved Jette Stenlev
<b>Type of implementing organization:</b>	Private enterprise
<b>Country (region/municipality):</b>	Denmark
<b>Year of good practice implementation and duration of the best practice (if applicable):</b>	2006-2019
<b>Target group aimed at:</b>	Teachers
<b>Funded by:</b>	Municipalities and schools
<b>Summary:</b>	

### 2. Short description of the best practice (national context, goals, strengths)

Cooperative Learning is a form of teaching that uses highly structured collaborative processes to create dynamics in the classroom. Instead of the pupils answering the teacher's questions one at a time or working individually on their tasks, all the pupils are made to work together in so-called "structures". These guide the pupils through thinking, writing, reading, problem solving, presentations etc. in the process of learning. All the pupils are active – and because they are talking and interacting a lot, they are active and thinking a lot. This anchor learning more efficiently.

The structures are generic and can be used in all subjects and at all levels in the education system. For example, when teachers have a subject to review, a text the pupils must read, tasks they must solve, or something to be discussed in class, there are structures that are suitable for all of these. The structures ensure that all pupils participate actively in the learning processes.

In Cooperative Learning, it is recognized that emotions and social relationships also play a central role for the pupils' well-being at school. Therefore, social relations, inclusion, and constructive behaviour is always integrated in the structures. This work gives any subject a new dimension and means that the teaching is not boring - not even if the pupils feel that the subject is.

Cooperative Learning is based on a social-constructivist approach to learning. It consists of concrete, easily accessible strategies that all teachers can use. The structures support that teachers can create effective learning and well-being in the classroom.

### 3. Implementation

The origin of Cooperative Learning dates back more than 100 years ago, but little research was made until the 1960s. The concept implemented in Denmark, was developed by Spencer Kagan, an American professor of psychology and education at the University of California Berkley. He gathered a lot of structures from teachers, and developed additional brain-based structures in order to prevent and redirect misbehaviour in classrooms.

In 2006 one of his books were translated and published in Denmark by Jette Stenlev. In this book, a number of structures were described as process guides to be used by teachers. Jette Stenlev build a company around this offering training workshops for teachers to introduce them to the structures (<https://cooperativelearning.dk>). Together with her team, she toured around in Denmark for many years with the concept, contracting with schools and municipalities. She has published several books with additional structures and focus areas, and she held well have held more than 1000 courses. Thus, many Danish teachers have familiarised themselves with the concept.

Cooperative Learning have been implemented in many other countries.

### 4. Outcomes and impact

Many teachers still use the structures many years after they have received training in it. When asked why, they explain that it is because the structures are flexible (can be used in all subjects), easy adjustable to fit into the didactic purposes of the teacher, and activate the pupils in engaging and varied ways. Cooperative Learning is therefore one of the few good examples of an implantation that has been anchored and created a lot of impact in schools.

### 5. Weaknesses / areas for improvement

The structures do not relate to the school subjects directly or the authentic and relevant themes to be explored by the pupils. It can be argued that this is both a weakness and a strength of the concept. Teachers still must find other didactic elements to include the learning goals, the content and processes of subjects and relevant themes. Thus, Cooperative Learning is an add on, not an all-in-one-resource for teachers with all the didactic elements that they need for preparing their teaching.

The structures are primarily communicated in physical guidebooks, and thus a digital directory with an intelligent search function and tag system could improve the concept.

### 6. Comments and/or other observations

Cooperative Learning is maybe the most impactful and sustainable didactic tool implemented in the Danish school system over the last 20 years. It is sustainable in the way that it is still in use long time after it's implementation. As mentioned in relation to the weaknesses, the concept can be further developed and supplemented with structures and other didactic elements to support teachers in preparing and engaging pupils in real-world learning projects.

## Best practice #5 - Idea Training, The Idea Game, The Sketch Game, and The Blending Game

### 1. Name and data

<b>Name of initiative:</b>	<i>Idea Training, The Idea Game, The Sketch Game, and The Blending Game</i>
<b>Name of implementing organization:</b>	<i>Danish Foundation for Entrepreneurship (FFE-YE.dk) implementing it at Danish schools.</i>
<b>Type of implementing organization:</b>	<i>Primary and Secondary schools (and other levels of education)</i>
<b>Country (region/municipality):</b>	<i>Denmark (and partly internationally)</i>
<b>Year of good practice implementation and duration of the best practice (if applicable):</b>	<i>2017-2022</i>
<b>Target group aimed at:</b>	<i>All ages from 8 years and up, including Primary, Secondary, high school, vocational education, and higher education.</i>
<b>Funded by:</b>	<i>Danish Foundation for Entrepreneurship</i>
<b>Summary:</b>	

### 2. Short description of the best practice (national context, goals, strengths)

Idea Training, The Idea Game, The Sketch Game, and The Blending Game originates from a project that involved a series of Danish schools, University College of Northern Denmark, Aalborg University, Via University College, The Danish Defense Academy and Odense Municipality. The notion of Idea Training, The Idea Game, The Sketch Game, and The Blending Game is based on the theoretical field of creativity that focuses on how to nurture creative skills and build creative confidence.

A series of longitudinal experiments (6-12 weeks) during 2013-2017 led to deeper theoretical insights into this field of creativity as well as a series of practical methods for developing creative skills and building creative confidence in school (and general education). The practice of nurturing creativity is distinct from the more popular field of creativity that focuses on creative processes.

Methods for creative processes are designed to temporarily enhance the creative production for example for 5 minutes, 2 hours or 3 days. They are typically designed for teams, not individuals. Creative process methods are often made up of a series of steps that helps the user going from a problem to a solution via creative efforts. The most popular creative methods in Denmark may be Design Thinking, CPS, The Creative Platform, as well as the KIE and FIRE models (design thinking models developed for schools).

Methods for nurturing creativity are designed to give long term advances of creative skills and boosting creative confidence for individuals or teams. Regularly creativity training can lead to

creativity becoming a habit, like a second nature. Methods for nurturing creativity rarely have any steps, but rather have one or more skill focus, for example focus on developing ideation skills, focus on developing visionary skills, or focus on developing exploration skills. While this field of creativity has been intensively researched since the 1960's, we still lack internationally recognized practical methods for nurturing creativity.

Idea Training consists of 200 creative exercises that are all designed to develop creative skills and boost creative confidence related to Ideation, flexibility, idea elaboration, persuasion, problem understanding, creative self-reflection, evaluating creativity, imagination, and mental visualization.

The Sketch Game is designed to use in class or with friends and family. It is designed on a draw-and-guess platform, where each drawing is started by the opposing team. Simply playing these games will lead to advanced creative skills and higher creative confidence.

The Idea Game is designed to use in class or with friends and family. It is designed on a race-to-win platform, where each idea count as a move forward on the board. Simply playing these games will lead to advanced creative skills and higher creative confidence. Simply playing these games will lead to advanced creative skills and higher creative confidence.

The Blending Game is designed to use in class or with friends and family. It is designed on a "mix and match" platform, where a set of new ideas give points. Simply playing these games will lead to advanced creative skills and higher creative confidence.

### 3. Implementation

The practices of Idea Training, The Idea Game, The Sketch Game, and The Blending Game are delivered as free-to-download and free hard copy versions from the Danish Foundation for Entrepreneurship. It was developed by Professor, PhD Christian Byrge.

Find the practical materials below.

- Idea Training: [www.idetræning.dk](http://www.idetræning.dk)
- The Idea Game, The Sketch Game and the Blending Game: <https://orcapress.fey.dk/kreativitet>

There are no official numbers for where and by how many the concept and practice has been implemented. However, at least 300 printed sets have been distributed as hard copy versions and lots of digital versions have been downloaded and sent via e-mail. Minimum 200 teachers have participated in courses based on these materials.

### 4. Outcomes and impact

These practical educational materials make it easy for teachers to kickstart nurturing creative skills and boosting creative confidence among their own pupils without any prior training needed. They are plug-and-play exercises that can be used as morning training, training for starting a lecture, intensive creativity training or for setting up a specific separate course for nurturing creativity. It is recommended that teachers will start out practicing the exercises with colleagues before using them on pupils - for the teachers to have a personal experience of the exercises that will make it easier for



them to understand how the training affects thinking and social interaction. Research shows that about 10 hours of training will lead to about 20-40 % increase in creative thinking, and about 50-100% increase in creative confidence.

### 5. Weaknesses / areas for improvement

The practices of Idea Training, The Idea Game, The Sketch Game, and The Blending Game concepts are all designed for developing creative skills and boost creative confidence, not for designing creative processes. This can be a bit difficult for teachers to understand - that creative skills can be advanced, that creative confidence can be boosted, and that this is not integrated into the traditional teaching processes. As such, the biggest weakness of the whole theoretical field of nurturing creativity is that few teachers know about it, and therefore tries to use it for other purposes (not for developing creative skills and confidence). The same issues result in some teachers rejecting the concepts because they do not match directly with national learning goals.

Another weakness is that the creative exercises are not integrated with other learning materials. Thus, it's supplementary and the exercises are accessed outside the learning portals and other digital platforms that teachers use most.

### 6. Comments and/or other observations

The practices of Idea Training, The Idea Game, The Sketch Game, and The Blending Game practices gives a highly positive and motivating experience for pupils. It quickly establishes a creative atmosphere with a high level of engagement. It is easy to use and requires no prior training for teachers or pupils. As such these concepts are interesting for inspiring the design of didactic elements (bricks) for a more creative, motivating, positive and engaging learning experience in schools. The feature that they can be used without prior training make them easy accessible and make them easier to disseminate.

## Best practice #6 - What will we do when we grow up? Handbook of crafts for girls and boys

### 1. Name and data

<b>Name of initiative:</b>	What will we do when we grow up? Handbook of crafts for girls and boys
<b>Name of implementing organization:</b>	Italian Committee for UNICEF ONLUS (Italy)
<b>Type of implementing organization:</b>	Partnership between four organisations (schools, private companies, NGO)
<b>Country (region/municipality):</b>	Italy
<b>Year of good practice implementation and duration of the best practice (if applicable):</b>	2016 - Istituto G. Marconi - Venturina di Livorno (Tuscany) and other schools.
<b>Target group aimed at:</b>	Pre-primary students, ages 3 to 5 years old  Elementary school children, ages 6 to 10 years old  Pre-primary school teachers  Elementary school teachers
<b>Funded by:</b>	Project Erasmus + "E4E - Education for Equality. Going beyond gender stereotypes", a project created with the aim of spreading a culture aimed at overcoming gender stereotypes through the development of tools and methods that involve both the educational system and institutions.
<b>Summary:</b>	The objective is to free our language from gender stereotypes through the education of children, addressing with them the idea that it is possible to choose a profession in a way free from prejudices related to the division between "feminine" and "masculine" professions. At the same time, the project aims to make adults (teachers and parents) aware of the importance of an inclusive and non-discriminatory language.

### 2. Short description of the best practice (national context, goals, strengths)

Students worked on the book "What will we be when we grow up? Handbook of professions for girls and boys" by Irene Biemmi, with illustrations by Lorenzo Terranera, published by Settenove in 2015.

The editorial project "What will we be when we grow up?" takes its cue from reflections on the theme of linguistic sexism and internationally were theorized by the neo-feminist movement between the 60s and 70s, and were introduced in Italy in the second half of the 80s thanks to the research of linguist Alma Sabatini (Recommendations for a non-sexist use of the Italian language, 1986; Sexism in Italy, 1987), Students worked on the book "What will we be when we grow up? Handbook of professions for girls and boys "by Irene Biemmi, with illustrations by Lorenzo Terranera, published by Settenove in 2015. The editorial project "What will we be when we grow up?" takes its cue from reflections on the theme of linguistic sexism and internationally were theorized by the neo-feminist movement between the 60s and 70s, and were introduced in Italy in the second half of the 80s thanks to the research of linguist Alma Sabatini (Recommendations for a non-sexist use of the Italian language, 1986; Sexism in Italy, 1987), until the most recent contributions of Robustelli (2000) and Sapegno (2010). The assumption of this research is that language speaking and the sexist practices embedded in it are indicators of, if not responsible for, gender stereotypes in society: this concept is the basis with the work done in class.

### 3. Implementation

Starting from the assumption that language is an instrument of communication and, at the same time, an instrument of perception and classification of reality, it is important that its use be "correct", not in a normative-prescriptive sense, but in the sense of fair, just, anti-discriminatory towards any social group. The first and fundamental actor called to realize this project of "liberation" from sexist stereotypes should be the school, and the work proposed in the good practice a key tool for a rethinking of equal language. Starting from this conception of language, the project aims to create a tool capable of narrating gender equality in a fairer and more equitable way. A tool made available to teachers and schools for the education of boys and girls and for an equal rethinking of language. The project aims to provide girls and boys with an imagery of professions free from sexist legacies and prejudices. To do so, it uses a gendered language, whereby each profession is properly declined in the feminine.

The protagonists are two children, Diego and Marta, who during a class assignment begin to dream about what job they might do when they grow up ... "the secretary!" Imagine Marta. No, not in an office: Marta thinks about becoming a secretary of a big party that deals with ecology! And Diego, who loves to read, imagines being the secretary of a library full of wonderful books. Or Marta: the engineer, aerospace engineer or astrophysicist! The investigative journalist or ... sports journalist! Her great passion!" Several works are analyzed together with the students, each declined to the masculine and feminine, according to the Recommendations for a non-sexist use of the Italian language.

### 4. Outcomes and impact

The book "What we will do when we grow up" has been used in many school projects throughout Italy, including a project that began in February 2017 and is still ongoing at the Istituto G. Marconi Venturina in Livorno (Tuscany). The project involves n. 10 elementary school classes. In the Italian context there is not yet a mature reflection on the relationship between language and sexist discrimination and the school world does not have operational tools to raise awareness of this issue among girls and boys. The editorial project "What will we be when we grow up?" is a valid tool to be used both in kindergarten and in the first two years of elementary school to teach boys and girls that there are no limits, related to gender, to their professional dreams.

At the same time, the project educates from an early age in the correct use of the Italian language in order to respect gender differences. The strength of the publishing project also derives from its potential use not only in the school context but also in the family context, creating a fruitful link on these issues between the school and parents/families.

#### 5. Weaknesses / areas for improvement

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#### 6. Comments and/or other observations

The project proved to be valid because it made us reflect on how much language can create sexist discrimination even unconsciously, because given by a habitual use of words.

## Best practice #7 - 100 possibilities instead of 2: a way to manage resistances

### 1. Name and data

<b>Name of initiative:</b>	100 possibilities instead of 2: a way to manage resistances
<b>Name of implementing organization:</b>	Italian Committee for UNICEF ONLUS (Italy)
<b>Type of implementing organization:</b>	Partnership between four organisations (schools, private companies, NGO)
<b>Country (region/municipality):</b>	Sweden
<b>Year of good practice implementation and duration of the best practice (if applicable):</b>	2009
<b>Target group aimed at:</b>	Pre-primary school students, 3 to 5 years old Elementary school students, 6 to 10 years old Elementary school teachers Others (families, associations, institutions etc.)
<b>Funded by:</b>	Project Erasmus + "E4E - Education for Equality. Going beyond gender stereotypes", a project created with the aim of spreading a culture aimed at overcoming gender stereotypes through the development of tools and methods that involve both the educational system and institutions.
<b>Summary:</b>	
The goal is to build consensus regarding goals related to gender education and with that eliminate misconceptions and resistance to changing these ideas that have settled over time.	

### 2. Short description of the best practice (national context, goals, strengths)

Resistance by some educators to working with gender equity is common. Resistance (including fear) comes from parents, teachers, other adults, and children of all ages. Often it is because we have a vague idea of what gender equality is. None of us grew up in an equal society, which makes it abstract.

If we don't know the goal, there is room for misconceptions to grow. In our work on gender equality and children, we have noticed that it is critical to clarify early on what the goal is. Where we are going. Common misconceptions about what gender equality means hinder us in the process of change.

### 3. Implementation

During the activity the goal and how it can be achieved was described, analyzing with the students:

What is gender equality? Where do you think we are now?

This may sound simple but it is crucial, especially discussing with the class what our experience is.

We saw that there are three ideas that are common:

1. Gender equality means that everyone should be and act adding i.e. girls and boys should have the same clothes and play the same games. Just as it was in the 1970s.
2. Gender equality means that we should do the opposite, that all boys to play with dolls and wear a dress and that all girls play with cars and have dungarees.
3. Gender equality means that we should remove the most masculine and feminine, like Barbie and Batman.

There are three common traps that make people angry because we want to create equal opportunities for children. This creates resistance that makes it very difficult to begin practical change.

It's important to talk about this and make it clear that these are three common mistakes. We could also talk about it by calling it "resistance," but it's nicer to just call it a "mistake." Everyone makes mistakes, and it's easier to just address them as mistakes than to tell people they have resistance. It's good to agree that none of us grew up in an equal society.

Building on this concept, we are very clear that gender equality is not achieved but we are working towards it.

Providing opportunities for all children, discussing and analyzing with them that "100 instead of 2" does not provide one possible way for girls and another for boys.

At issue is our freedom of "action space":

- What can we do
- What we can say
- What feelings we are allowed to show.
- How we can look and show ourselves
- What we are allowed to dream about what we will become as adults

It was explained that the action space is the "how" we can influence our lives and also the society we live in. It is about "being able" to do.

### 4. Outcomes and impact

There has been no official evaluation on the students. But as far as the teachers are concerned, since our gender education programs have been changed and we put this methodology at the beginning of every kick-off meeting, we could see that we spend less time arguing and we also had less resistance against the practical change to implement gender equality. This methodology referring to the work done on gender equality has been very successful in Sweden and we have had the pleasure to export

the idea to Finland in the organization "Folkhälsan" (meaning public health) which works with Swedish speaking kindergartens in Finland, to Norway in collaboration with "Likestilling Center" (center for equality), and to Åland's program for gender equality in kindergarten. Åland is an island located between Sweden and Finland.

Why is this considered a good practice? It is crucial both to have a common goal to work toward and to clear up misconceptions that create resistance. Our experience is that teachers have a way of explaining to parents and others what they are doing as they initiate change toward a gender-equal preschool and school.

## 5. Weaknesses / areas for improvement

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## 6. Comments and/or other observations

When it is clear that gender equality is about giving children more opportunities, and once the depth (and positive consequences associated with changing one's mindset) is explained and analyzed, there are not many who say they don't want it. Every parent and teacher would like to implement and give children more opportunities.

## Best practice #8 - Equality through books

### 1. Name and data

<b>Name of initiative:</b>	<b>Equality through books</b>
<b>Name of implementing organization:</b>	Italian Committee for UNICEF ONLUS (Italy)
<b>Type of implementing organization:</b>	Partnership between four organisations (schools, private companies, NGO)
<b>Country (region/municipality):</b>	Sweden
<b>Year of good practice implementation and duration of the best practice (if applicable):</b>	From 2007 to 2016
<b>Target group aimed at:</b>	Pre-primary school students, ages 3 to 5 years old  Elementary school students, 6 to 10 years old  Elementary school teachers  Others (families, associations, institutions etc.)
<b>Funded by:</b>	Project Erasmus + “E4E – Education for Equality. Going beyond gender stereotypes”, a project created with the aim of spreading a culture aimed at overcoming gender stereotypes through the development of tools and methods that involve both the educational system and institutions.
<b>Summary:</b>  The goal is to use books as a tool to work with gender equality in a normal and creative way.	

### 2. Short description of the best practice (national context, goals, strengths)

Olika Publishing Ltd has been publishing books since 2007 that go beyond gender stereotypes and provide more opportunities for children to engage with the topic. The books and the discussions around them have come in these ten years to influence both other publishing houses and the public's awareness of these issues. Schools now have much more interest in which books to choose and how they reflect the values they want (and need) to reinforce, such as gender equality, gender awareness, and so on.

Olika has been awarded the Equality price for her work on equality through books, and has also been invited to speak on these issues by the government both in Sweden and abroad.



### 3. Implementation

The activity was carried out by choosing some children's books by teachers, following some criteria:

Ensuring that the books chosen do not reinforce stereotypical gender norms.

Making sure the books chosen have a variety of family forms.

Ensuring that they reflect the diversity of modern society and that they are not critical of norms, i.e., that they show differences in a fair and unproblematic way.

The methodology is simple:

- STEP 1 is to have students gain awareness related to character representation in children's books.
- STEP 2 is to find books that allow all children to be able to reflect themselves in the main characters and books that show more opportunity than gender stereotypical books.
- STEP 3 is to make sure the books are normocritical in that they portray differences in a fair and unproblematic way.

Analytical and creative work with students starts with the chosen books:

- Step 1: Analysis and creative work with students: how and in what way is the character portrayed? How do you think the character is portrayed? Rewrite a new story!
- Step 2: Analytical and creative work with students: replace the male character with the female character, or vice versa.

Step 3: Analytical and creative work with students: rewrite the story so that supporting roles become protagonists.

Critical pedagogical norm knowledge to analyze: In order for a book to be critical of norms and contribute to norm creativity, it is important that the challenge of norms is not focused in a problem-oriented way. For example: if a boy wears a dress and not pants, the book should not focus on that, or if someone has two mothers it should be normal, as in a book with a father and a mother.

Norms critique is the analysis where we look at what norms are in place and what they bring for us as a society and for children and their possibilities in life. Creativity of norms is about moving to action! By taking action and doing things in new ways, like reading new books, we change norms so that they are inclusive and expect differences by treating them as equal. The critical perspective of norms is recommended by the Swedish government as a tool to combat discrimination and bullying. The goal is for all children to be able to reflect themselves and show the contemporary world and its incredible diversity; for books to challenge old stereotypes and promote an open and inclusive society, and to be a tool for fulfilling preschool and school tasks to work on gender equality.

### 4. Outcomes and impact

There hasn't been a formal evaluation. But working with and educating schools over the last five years, we have found that this methodology of starting a change process with books works very well.

Why is it considered a good practice? Books are already part of pedagogical work with children. Therefore, it is an easy step for pedagogues and/or parents to take. At the same time, books are powerful tools for working with changing norms and expectations of what is possible in life. They can offer a sense that you are not alone in a way of living, acting, or feeling that is most important to the development of self-esteem and self-worth and how likely it is that you will continue on a path that you feel is right for you, regardless of whether or not it conflicts with current norms (such as the feelings and interest you like to express).

They can also provide a window into new possibilities for acting and being, as well as creating an expectation and knowledge and acceptance that people are different from one another.

By making sure that all of society is included in the books you read and offer to children, you create a sense of inclusion and respect and a belief that all people have the same rights, regardless of how they lead their lives. And by working with books, we also make it fairly easy to begin the work of changing gender stereotypes: the first step is to start reading new books or working through familiar ones, reframing them with an inclusive, equal-opportunity eye.

Books can be a great tool for working with social sustainability and equality and preventing discrimination. Reading is fun, improves your vocabulary, and opens doors to new and different worlds.

## 5. Weaknesses / areas for improvement

Without taking anything away from the Olika Publishing Ltd publications, which are attentive to the theme, it could be even more interesting in the future to work with students, assisted by the teacher, on classic books (i.e. known and valid from a literary point of view but not so attentive to the theme of discrimination), just to make the guided reflection on the theme even more fruitful and interesting.

## 6. Comments and/or other observations

The work is even more interesting because not only does it encourage reflection and meditation on the theme in a very creative way, but it also encourages children to read, a practice that is increasingly neglected, and the project represents an interesting way to bring the habit of reading books back to children.

## Best practice #9 - We are all the same but we are all different

### 1. Name and data

<b>Name of initiative:</b>	<b>We are all the same but we are all different</b>
<b>Name of implementing organization:</b>	Italian Committee for UNICEF ONLUS (Italy)
<b>Type of implementing organization:</b>	Partnership between four organisations (schools, private companies, NGO)
<b>Country (region/municipality):</b>	Italy
<b>Year of good practice implementation and duration of the best practice (if applicable):</b>	2015 - 2016
<b>Target group aimed at:</b>	Elementary school students, ages 6-10  Parents
<b>Funded by:</b>	Project Erasmus + "E4E – Education for Equality. Going beyond gender stereotypes", a project created with the aim of spreading a culture aimed at overcoming gender stereotypes through the development of tools and methods that involve both the educational system and institutions.
<b>Summary:</b>  Improve equal opportunity among classmates and move beyond gender stereotypes through programs whose purpose is to promote the importance of differences, inclusion, and dialogue	

### 2. Short description of the best practice (national context, goals, strengths)

The objective of the project is to analyze the perception of social relations and gender differences in boys and girls in the first year of elementary school (50 students in total). This project aims to promote the implementation of Art. 2 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child about non-discriminating, overcoming gender stereotypes and increasing the opportunities for girls and boys to develop and fully express their identity, regardless of gender roles.

### 3. Implementation

The activities are part of a large-scale project whose goal is to promote shared education in the field of children's and adolescents' rights, which is part of UNICEF's "Tree of Rights" project. Both students and their parents were involved in this in-depth analysis; boys and girls analyzed the work of their parents and relatives, and adults were informed and reflected on their children's individual dreams.

The main activities are listed below:

- Creation of a bulletin board of memories, a specific tool that ensures that each child can tell his or her story and thus share his or her experience with others;
- Reading on the Interactive Whiteboard of the text "Children's Rights in Simple Words." Afterwards, the children were able to share their thoughts and opinions with others;
- Guided discussion, led by the teacher and conducted with the whole class, so that children explore and express their ideas about being male/female, the differences between boys and girls, and gender-related stereotypes.

Questions specifically prepared for children of this age were asked on simple topics, such as the widely held view that pink is the color that identifies a girl, while blue indicates a boy. Other questions investigated gender-related labels (e.g., is it true that jogging is for boys/girls?); finally, gender stereotypes. Students were also asked if they could perceive any differences in the teacher's behavior when talking to a boy or a girl.

Create a journey of self-discovery and adult discovery through the use of pictures that asked them to recognize different jobs, each of which is a job. to recognize different jobs, each of which was described with specific characteristics for boys and girls.

- Conduct a survey of the jobs held by the children's parents, drawing a histogram to share the data collected
- Displaying the chart on the jobs in the different classes, sharing observations on the results displayed by the chart on the different parent jobs;
- Dramatized and interactive reading of the book by Irene Biemmi and Lorenzo Terranera "What we will do when we grow up".
- Role play, the purpose of which is to share each child's personal dreams;
- Invite each child to express with a drawing their favorite work, thus showing their dreams as fundamental tools for the growth and development of children's self-esteem;
- Organize an open day at the end of the school year where all of the children's drawings and work could be shown to their parents. children could be shown to their parents and the process could be explained.
- One year later a follow-up activity to understand what the children remembered of the experience and to ask if their dreams were the same or if they have changed after one year.

Methodology: Classroom work was developed in an environment geared toward shared learning and focused on the importance of promoting meaningful relationships within the classroom: "tutoring," "cooperative learning," "peer education," "circle time," "problem solving," all approaches that involve both interaction and cooperation. The work has given particular importance to the processes of observation, research and discovery through direct experience to encourage a curious and flexible attitude and thus develop more advanced ways of thinking.

The teaching activities were based primarily on a hands-on approach with different methodologies:

- Game-based learning workshops for the management and development of relational aspects.

The activities on the perception of one's own gender and gender stereotypes have been developed with particular attention to the theoretical assumptions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child about non-discrimination, thus becoming a tool for the realization of art. 2 on "non-discrimination". This reference to the Convention on the Rights of the Child is important because it places the fight against gender stereotypes within a system of protection and promotion of human rights, a system that requires a systemic and complex approach.

The perception of oneself as a sexual subject, as well as the freedom of self-expression, regardless of the gender roles suggested by one's culture, is one of the elements that characterize the realization at different levels of all the other rights described in the Convention on the Rights of the Child about, going beyond gender. Moreover, it was decided to develop the work starting from the biographies of the children, focusing on their stories and perceptions about their bodies and their being male or female. Each boy and girl kept a journal, where they could jot down descriptions, thoughts, and emotions about the activities they did.

#### 4. Outcomes and impact

The project positively influenced students' school activities and teachers' skills. The moment of self-evaluation, especially thanks to their personal diary that allowed a moment of debriefing, helped the boys and girls to reflect on the activity carried out. Through self-evaluation, the boys and girls became aware of their learning experience, their skills and their strengths.

The verification carried out after one year revealed two important elements for a positive evaluation: the children remembered the experience very well and the dreams of many of them changed from the first time; after a after one year the boys chose dreams traditionally closer to those of the female world and vice versa.

#### 5. Weaknesses / areas for improvement

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#### 6. Comments and/or other observations

The boys and girls had the opportunity to talk about themselves, sharing and exploring their creativity in a rich and stimulating context such as school, and through this process they both learned about and experienced their rights. The active participation that characterized the work demonstrates that expressive potential leads to innovation and dialogue between the worlds of children and adults, as well as between each other's differences. as well as between each other's differences and resources.

In each phase of the work, children participated constantly and actively, male and female students did not just stand by and watch or observe passively.

It was a shared design experience, greatly enriched by the fact that different people were involved, shared their experiences and gave their input. In particular, there was constant interaction between the school, parents, and UNICEF.

## Best practice #10 - Put yourself in my shoes!

### 1. Name and data

<b>Name of initiative:</b>	<b>Put yourself in my shoes!</b>
<b>Name of implementing organization:</b>	Vejle Kommune – Danimarca
<b>Type of implementing organization:</b>	Partnership between four organisations (schools, private companies, NGO)
<b>Country (region/municipality):</b>	Italy
<b>Year of good practice implementation and duration of the best practice (if applicable):</b>	2020
<b>Target group aimed at:</b>	High school students, 11 - 13 years old
<b>Funded by:</b>	Project Erasmus + "21° C - SDG, The context of the UN's sustainable development goals for pupils" where the project activities are oriented to encourage the acquisition by young people of those skills and transversal competencies required in the 21st century with reference to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The working method used for this purpose involves the development of educational materials and online teaching modules for students in the age group 10-15 years, called upon to reflect on crucial issues such as the environment, climate change, circular economy, etc.,
<b>Summary:</b>	
"Put yourself in my shoes!" aims to stimulate students to reflect on gender discrimination.	

### 2. Short description of the best practice (national context, goals, strengths)

"Put yourself in my shoes!" is one of the activities that are part of the modules developed for the project "21st C - SDG", a project that, through the involvement of primary and secondary schools attended in various partner countries by students aged between 10 and 15 years, and despite the enormous difficulties imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, has been able to test the effectiveness of the learning tools developed (including, precisely, "Put yourself in my shoes!" related to goal n. 5) with reference to 6 of the 17 goals of sustainable development in terms of acquisition of transversal skills.

"Put yourself in my shoes!" has set itself the objective of:

- stimulate critical reflection on the gender inequity that still dominates in the social models of the third millennium, helping to understand that this is a transversal phenomenon that also affects societies that consider themselves more advanced and not only those linked to ancient social and religious traditions.
- Stimulate the use of creative solutions in the resolution of gender problems, encouraging a reading of reality that is autonomous and free from the conditioning of the "herd".

A further strong point is represented not only by the discussions/reflections on the subject, but also by the theatrical part of the dramatization (part that was resolved - due to the distancing given by COVID - in the writing of a monologue on the theme of discrimination) which helped a lot to empathize, making in a very practical and immediately understandable way the key concept related to respect: "Do not do to others what you would not like to be done to you".

### 3. Implementation

The module begins with a warm-up phase in which the trainer asked the class some questions capable of arousing curiosity and reflection on the topic by all, male and female. Examples: Do you know what the expression 'gender equality' refers to? Is it true that women's brains are different from men's brains? Are there activities that need to be done by men and other things that need to be done by women? Who determined this and how? Is this correct in your opinion? Having exhausted the questions and the hot reactions of the students, the trainer invited the students to reflect on their own beliefs, which could be based on unfounded stereotypes and preconceptions. Next, the students were asked to write a monologue or a short story (in the first or third person), either autobiographical or not, on the theme of discrimination (the original work should have included a group dramatization, but the rules imposed by COVID did not allow it). All students opted for the autobiographical monologue. Once the students had completed the elaboration phase, they each presented their writings which were commented on by the class. This phase will be followed by further questions and moments of discussion, arising from the writing work. The class then worked on writing lists of situations recurring in real life (and experienced in their daily lives) that from their point of view represented discrimination against the female universe. Most of the students belonged to the female gender, but this did not detract from the work, quite the contrary: the male part of the class responded positively and attentively, with very interesting moments of discussion and listening.

### 4. Outcomes and impact

This activity has collected, from the students, many consents and lively participation. The comparison (which proved to be useful and beneficial right from the start) between boys and girls has allowed them to understand how many behaviors - accepted as customary - are offensive and unwelcome (example: whistling at a girl). The creative work and the confrontation among peers and with the trainer allowed the students to confront themselves with topics that arouse their curiosity but that, in some cases, are not always easy to accept, judging by some comments: "I took off a weight", "at home, if I talk about this topic, my parents get irritated", "What I wrote, I really think. It prompted me to write because I felt called out on it. (...) About the work regarding their personal emotions that emerged from writing the monologues/stories, the words that were most spoken is "anger", "sadness", "frustration".

### 5. Weaknesses / areas for improvement

Certainly, the type of activity requires at least more than two hours: therefore, it is necessary to plan the development of the activity necessarily over two meetings

### 6. Comments and/or other observations

It emerged, from the students, the great need to be heard and to expose their own thoughts. The creative writing work was very helpful.