



Art-Based Program for Social and Emotional Development of Children

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For 8 weeks we ran an art-based program for social and emotional development in 5th grade of primary school for children aged 11-12 years. We met once a week for 45 minutes and worked with 25 children on improving their skills in communication, cooperation, manifestation and recognition of emotions and identity enforcement. Each skill was covered by 2 lessons, with the 1st and last lesson including a class climate evaluation using the CES (Trickett, Moos) and B-3 (Braun) methods.

Our goal was to improve the class climate by drawing attention to the feelings of children toward their class and class mates, to their ability to cooperate in the class setting and to communicate with each other without fear, shame or aggression. The use of art-based methods appeared as the most useful because of the general inability of the children to express their thoughts and feelings in words because of the fear of being laugh at and misunderstood. Particular activities were based on art-therapy in the broader sense and on art education, helping children to express themselves and communicate with the use of drawings, music or movement.

The final evaluation revealed that after the whole program children were more confident in expressing their identity, more content with the class climate and they thought of their class as more safe, intimate and cooperative environment.