

# Aprender a Convivir for Early Childhood Education Program Overview

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Generated: 2024-12-01 10:46:12



## Author of this description

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## Program name

Aprender a Convivir for Early Childhood Education

## Country of Origin

Spain

## Other Countries

Norway, Denmark

## Implementation level of the program

Regional

## Type of Program

Evidence-based intervention

## Description

Aprender a Convivir is a program that offers social skills training and aims to give children a series of strategies that help them in social relationships.

This ability involves students who follow the rules and limits that enable an adequate experience; understand their feelings and emotions, being able to recognize them in themselves and in others, demonstrate self-control and empathy. It also allows them to learn the basic aspects of communication. Tools for self-knowledge are provided and they are guided to love and appreciate themselves, in a context of learning and interaction.

Material - Preschool:

The intervention content is organized in four blocks:

- 1) "Rules and complying with them" - addresses the rules of coexistence in interpersonal relationships, values and problems due to non-compliance with rules.
- 2) "Feelings and emotions" - consists of the identification of feelings, expression and emotional regulation, as well as the resolution of possible conflicts.
- 3) "Communication skills" - deals with the basic forms and concepts of communication.
- 4) "Help and cooperation" - promotes pro-social behaviors, such as aid, sharing and cooperation.

Each block consists of three units, working one unit per week and each unit corresponds to two sessions. The time involved is one hour a week (half an hour per session) and the total implementation completes 12 weeks of the school year.

Material – Mandatory school:

It is based on what was discussed in the previous phase, but with some changes: introduction of new content and a modification of the structure. In addition, there are no parts, but rather the division of labor into units, each addressing a theme.

The program is made up of 14 units (rules, values, attention; emotional awareness, self-control, respect, empathy, assertiveness, waiting for the moment, interpersonal relations, making friends, self-concept, conflict resolution I, conflict resolution II) and 14 topics, at the rate of one topic per week.

Each topic covers four sessions, for a total duration of one hour 45 minutes:

- 1) Introduction through vignettes;
- 2) Learning through play;
- 3) Stories teach us something;
- 4) What we learn at school we also do at home.

The total implementation covers 14 weeks of the school year.

Methods and materials:

The program presents an active and integrated global methodology that allows to transmit the motivating form of the learning contents. The technique is essentially based on problem solving, through everyday situations.

During preschool, the method is more flexible and is performed implicitly. By contrast, primary education students work on problem solving with the help of a poster that systematically lays out the different steps of the method. Also used are other types of strategies, such as cooperative groups or roleplaying, in addition to discussion groups and brainstorming in primary education.

The resources used are quite diverse. In preschool they resort to puppets and in primary school the squares with characters. Tales, games, songs, murals and other specific materials are also used for each of the proposed activities.

Depending on the tasks, they can be performed individually, in small groups, or large groups.

Every week, teachers invite students to reflect on the fulfillment of the proposed and worked goals.

### **Age Range**

3-7 years

### **Age Range Information**

Childrens from 3 to 7 years of age, that is, at the end of preschool and the beginning of mandatory education.

### **SEL Skills Targeted**

Relationship skills, Social awareness, Self-awareness, Self-management

### **Sequenced Activities**

The intervention involves the implementation of activities, organized sequentially in order to promote the development of the competencies recommended by the program. These are learned, trained and then put into practice in the family context and social.

### **Active Learning**

The program includes several activities that allow active learning, such as role plays, discussions and also tasks that are assumed and implemented in the family context.

### **Outcomes / Results**

The program has proven to be effective for optimizing prosocial behaviors and for preventing disruptive behaviors.

The results show that the intervention carried out contributed to improving the social competence of the children. The effects of the intervention were significant in each of the variables analyzed since the children who participated in the intervention improved in social cooperation, social interaction, social independence and in their total social competence.

### **Strengths and Weaknesses**

Strength - the program offers resources that allow teachers to reliably address the teaching-learning of social competence, in systematic fashion and with a prior assessment.

Weakness - there is no specific training program for mothers and fathers.

### **References**

Alba, G., Justicia-Arráez, A., Pichardo, M. C., & Justicia, F. (2013). Aprender a Convivir. A program for improving social competence in preschool and elementary school children. *Electronic Journal of Research in Educational Psychology*, 11(3), 843-904. <https://doi.org/10.14204/ejrep.31.13105>

Justicia-Arráez A., Pichardo M. C., & Justicia F. (2015). Longitudinal study of the effects of the Aprender a Convivir Program on children's social competence. *Revista de Psicodidáctica*, 20(2), 263-283.

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### **Citation**

This document was generated from the database used to create the Programs Compendium:

Koltcheva, N., Wastijn, B., Achten, M., Van Rossem, L. & Costa, I. S (2022). Programs for Social and Emotional Skills Development for Early and Preschool Children Applied in European Countries. Compendium. EU-SELF Project. ISBN 978-619-233-211-2 (can be downloaded from <https://euself.nbu.bg>)