



# EmPeCemos

## Program Overview

---

Generated: 2024-12-01 10:46:13



## Author of this description

Isabel Sofia Costa, Centro Social de Soutelo

## Program name

EmPeCemos

## Country of Origin

Spain

## Implementation level of the program

Regional

## Type of Program

Evidence-based intervention

## Description

EmPeCemos is a program based on theory and evidence of the trajectories of developing early-stage conduct problems. It is a preventive program, aimed at the child himself, his parents and his teachers, to prevent serious conduct problems and drug abuse, in problematic children.

EmPeCemos focuses on working on the emotions, thoughts and behaviours of parents, teachers and children to promote a spiral of positive changes that allows us to get out of the circle of reactions that are behind children's behavioural problems.

Format:

Three components:

The family component - 12 sessions that train parents in...

- 1) positive parenting practices;
- 2) effective management of disruptive behaviour;
- 3) establishing affectionate relationships between parents and children;
- 4) support for children's cognitive-emotional development.

The child component - 12 sessions divided into three parts:

- 1) emotional skills (identification and regulation of emotions);
- 2) cognitive skills (perspective-taking, problem-solving);
- 3) social skills (non-verbal communication, establishing friendships, empathy).

The teacher component - 8 sessions that train teachers in strategies for dealing with problem children and their families (praise, setting rules in the classroom, communicating with parents, using rewards and negative consequences, promoting cognitive-emotional skills).

The three components of the program were implemented in groups of 5 to 10 participants.

Methods and materials:

The three EmPeCemos components are taught in groups, following detailed manuals and are designed to help each other. Parents practice the learned content before trying it out at home.

The program can be applied in a clinical or school context, the latter being more frequent.

The program is administered after a screening process that involves reports from parents and teachers about disruptive behaviours.

## **Age Range**

3-7 years

## **Age Range Information**

- Children between 5 and 11 years old with behaviour problems;
- Parents;
- Teachers.

## **Group Size**

Between 5 and 10.

## **SEL Skills Targeted**

Relationship skills, Social awareness

## **Sequenced Activities**

Skills that the program targets:

Family

- support and attachment from parents;
- positive management of family;
- prosocial involvement opportunities with parents.

Individual and peers

- skills for social interaction;
- prosocial behaviour;
- coping skills.

School and work

- opportunities for prosocial involvement in education;
- rewards and disincentives in school.

And...

- communication;
- self-control;
- problem-solving skills.

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

## **Active Learning**

Several training techniques are used, based on cognitive-behavioural principles: presentations, execution, observation of models, role-playing and practice in natural contexts.

The practice in natural contexts, planned and supervised by the program, and applied to the specific problems of each participant, is considered one of the main keys of EmPeCemos.

## **Outcomes / Results**

The effectiveness of the intervention was assessed using a randomized design, including control and experimental / groups assessed before and after the intervention.

EmPeCemos has shown significant effects on the main elements addressed by the main component.

Results:

Parenting practices

decrease: severe and inconsistent discipline;

increases: positive paternity, monitoring of the child and affective family environment.

Children's skills

increases: identification of emotions, problem-solving, social skills assessed by parents and teachers;

decrease: disruptive problems (attention deficits, hyperactivity-impulsivity and oppositional defiant behaviours) and relations with antisocial peers.

Teacher self-efficacy in dealing with problematic children and their families.

EmPeCemos has been implemented in Galicia and it can be implemented elsewhere.

## **Strengths and Weaknesses**

Although EmPeCemos was conceived of as a joint and coordinated intervention programme for families, teachers and children, its implementation showed that the intensive and simultaneous involvement of these three agents is not always possible. There are some difficulties in participating in interventions aimed at families and teachers, associated with the work overload, the combining schedules due to family responsibilities, situations of personal stress, or scepticism regarding the effectiveness of interventions.

Longer follow-up will allow us to assess the full impact of EmPeCemos on the developmental trajectory of disruptive children, including patterns of drug use and antisocial behaviour in adolescence.

## **References**

Romero, E., Rodríguez, C., Villar, P., & Gómez-Fraguela, X. A. (2016). Intervention on early-onset conduct problems as indicated prevention for substance use: A seven-year follow up. *Adicciones*, 29(3), 150-162. <https://doi.org/10.20882/adicciones.722>

## **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>)