

PALS – Playing and Learning to Socialise

Program Overview

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Author of this description

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Program name

PALS – Playing and Learning to Socialise

Country of Origin

Australia

Other Countries

United Kingdom, Ireland

Implementation level of the program

Organization

Type of Program

Evidence-based intervention

Description

PALS is a program for children from 3 to 6 years old, teaching them to solve problems in situations of social interaction, in a constructive way. It aims to help children in their socio-emotional development, with an impact on an adaptive and positive transition to school.

This program features large and small group sessions and parent involvement.

Format:

The program is designed for use with small groups of four to eight children, implemented in a school context.

Each specific skill is covered in one session, for a total of 10 sessions. Skills are taught in an order of development.

The program is divided into two parts:

first part: social skills (greeting, sharing, taking shifts, etc).

second part: self-management skills (dealing with stressful situations and anger management, etc).

In half of the sessions, the skills are reinforced with the display of a video where the children solve a similar social problem.

The program also includes suggestions of activities for the team to implement and feedback to parents on the skills they were taught so they can practice them at home.

Methods and materials:

The program uses:

stories represented by puppets;

video sets;

survey questions;
dramatization activities;
songs.

Puppets are used to represent a story that presents a social problem related to the theme of a particular session. Questions are asked of children to help them solve problems related to social situations.

Age Range

0-3 years, 3-7 years

Age Range Information

Children between 3 and 6 years old.

Group Size

Groups of four to eight children.

SEL Skills Targeted

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

Sequenced Activities

Skills targeted:

Listening

Taking turns

Greeting others

Sharing

Empathy

Solving problems

Dealing with feelings (sadness, fear and anger)

In the PALS Program, skills are taught in 20-30 minute sessions, in a specific order.

Active Learning

The skills taught can be reinforced at home through information provided to parents and suggestions to professionals.

Outcomes / Results

The results of the first pilot study revealed that children in the experimental group significantly reduced problematic behaviors and increased the range of social skills compared to children in the control group.

In addition, there are numerous examples of evidence to support the effectiveness of the program, which include:

Nursery staff noticing an increase in the amount of speech from quiet and withdrawn children;

Parents happy because their children say 'hello' and 'bye' more often;

An increase in the confidence of the nursery staff to deal with difficult behaviors;
Increased information and the needs of a child, improving the planning and teaching process.

Strengths and Weaknesses

The program promotes good practices and habits, in addition to involving parents and encouraging them to implement practices at home.

Additional Information

<https://lennoxheadcommunitypreschool.com.au/pals-social-skills-learning-program/>

References

James, S. & Mellor J. (2007). Evaluating the use of the Playing and Learning to Socialise (PALS) Programme. Citeseer.

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://eusef.nbu.bg>)