



Activity 2 – MOOC1 Building the buddy network

IO2 Portfolio of the Four-minute BarrierS Erasmus+ project

Objective of the activity	Building an inclusive and safe learning environment for the child with impairments, by organizing activities in which his friends or classmates are equally involved. Building a network of friends.
Any materials necessary	The material necessary for each of the activities will be listed in the description
Participants / stakeholders	PE teacher or coach, parents, child’s friends and class mates, the child itself etc.
Detailed description	

Common ground

Rationale

This activity will help break the ice between participants, while giving them the first experience in being a person with visual impairment or an assisting one.

Objectives

To “break the ice” in the group;

To experience guiding and support techniques with persons who are “blind”;

To open-up towards working with a person with visual impairments;

Requirements

Materials:

Pieces of paper;

Pens.

Time: 15 min.

Description

The facilitator asks one quarter of the participants to put on their blindfolds. Then, the group will be divided in teams of 4-6 learners. The facilitator gives the group a specific time (around 5 minutes) to write a list of everything they all have in common. Tell them to avoid the obvious aspects (e.g. "we are all taking this course", “we are all women/men”). When time is up, the facilitator asks each group how



many items they have listed. For fun, ask them to announce some of the most interesting ones.

Discussion topics:

How was it to be blindfolded?

How was it to work with people that could not see? What kind of support did you offer?

Was the support enough for the people with blindfolds?

What could you learn from this?

If during the activity the facilitator observes that the guiding techniques are not appropriate (e.g. one is not offering the elbow but pulling the blindfolded person around or pushing him), he will stop the exercise for a second and explain again the guiding rules.

Life statues

RATIONALE

This activity aims at identifying the current state of the community (classroom/school/city) in terms of inclusion, the main barriers for inclusion of persons with disabilities, but also what are the areas of intervention to which the participants can contribute.

OBJECTIVES

Help participants identify different contributions that they can make to create a more inclusive world.

REQUIREMENTS

Time: 30 min.

DESCRIPTION

1. Brainstorm with the group about the actors that influence the participation of persons with disabilities in school and leisure activities (e.g. parents, school, NGOs, local institutions, friends etc.). Write them down on the flipchart until you have a good overview. In the end ask: “Who are we missing?”
2. Make sure you have enough elements.
3. Let then the participants choose one actor that they would like to represent. They can do this by becoming a statue in the center of the circle they are standing in. One by one, participants can choose one role and represent it in the form of a statue. They should position themselves always in relation to the existing



system and explain why they chose that particular position.

4. Attach to each statue a rectangular piece of paper with the name of the actor being represented so everyone knows who he/she is.
5. When the system is complete, ask everyone to freeze and ask all to observe it.
6. Now give an opportunity for the others to replace elements of the system (statues) in order to improve it so that the persons with visual impairments are more involved in the social and professional life of the community. Always validate with the group what is being changed and how it affects the system. Write down on a flipchart all the proposed changes.

Discussion topics:

What have you noticed about the current situation?

What changes do you think are needed for an accessible world?

Who may be the main actors of change?

What can be your personal contribution?

Ask participants to look at the proposed changes and write in their learning diaries what could be their personal contribution to one or more of these changes.

Training pupils for offering support (example: Sighted guide techniques)

Rationale

Apart from having an open and supportive attitude towards their colleagues with disability, the pupils also need to learn how to offer them assistive support. This is an example of an activity through which participants learn some of the most important techniques they can use to be a sighted guide for a pupil with visual impairments.

Objectives

To develop the participants' sighted guide skills.

Requirements

Materials:

White cane;

1 hand-out for each participant.



Time: 90 min.

Description

The facilitator will demonstrate different sighted guiding techniques to the participants, maybe even one of them as an example. The facilitator should approach at least the following:

- How to use the white cane for approaching obstacles;
- Different techniques about using the white cane (e.g. by following the corner between the wall and the floor, by swinging it);
- Approaching stairs: using the cane perpendicular to the first stair to measure its height, informing the person with visual impairments that the stairs are going up or down;
- Signs for seeking help in different countries (e.g. keeping the hand horizontally, towards the front, and the cane in the hand perpendicular to the hand);
- How to show you want to cross the street in different countries;
- How to show you want to help a person with visual impairments (e.g. by touching his/her forearm with the back of your own forearm);
- How to guide a person with visual impairments in narrow spaces (e.g. on a narrow street, between 2 cars);
- How to describe the landscape, the surroundings, colours etc. How to point to directions;
- How to behave (e.g. being relaxed, not being embarrassed by the looks of other curious people, talking regularly, not avoiding “taboo” words like “see”, “look” etc.).

The participants will be divided into two groups. In the first part of the exercise, the persons from the first group will be blindfolded, and in the second one the persons from the second group will be blindfolded. Participants will make pairs consisting in persons from both groups.

The ones with no blindfolds will guide their blindfolded colleagues through a path that the facilitator will indicate. This path should be chose so that it includes:

- Sitting on a chair;
- Doors;
- Some different obstacles (chairs, tables, boxes etc.);
- Stairs;
- Steps;



- Narrow spaces;
- Going on different streets;
- Crossing different streets.

Participants will also be asked to describe the surroundings to their partners.

After walking for 15 minutes on the assigned route, the participants can exchange the blindfold and their roles with their partners.

During the activity, the facilitator will keep an eye on the techniques that the participants use and help them correct any mistakes that they make.

For remembering the techniques, the participants will be offered a handout describing them.

Role-playing game

RATIONALE

Participants will be able to understand how it is possible to combat exclusion of persons with disabilities.

RESOURCES

Time: 60-90 minutes

Resources: facilitator must prepare three or four cards for the role-playing game (the number of cards depends on the number of participants in the training). It is recommended to prepare your cards taking into account the specifics of the community and the local context.

Preparations: no preparation is required

INSTRUCTIONS

Divide participants into three or more groups. Each group must take one card for the role game. Give them 30 minutes to prepare roles.

Ask each group to present its role game. After each presentation, discuss possible solutions to the problem and invite participants to change one of the actors of the role play and act that solution. The only actor that cannot be changed is the one discriminating the person with disabilities.

Write down the proposals on paper or on a blackboard (for example, among the proposals can be - education and training, presentations, negotiations, etc.). Ask if there are some other proposals from the group, that will not be enacted.



When the groups' presentations are completed, review all of the recorded proposals. Ask participants about possible additions and practical recommendations how to change the perception on disability in the community. Record additional suggestions.

Explain that, as seen in previous activities, the perception can be changed, because it is a product of the society. The roles of the persons can be adapted to the current times. Ask participants what kind of changes they would make in society.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

How did you feel to participate in this activity?

How can this activity help us understand exclusion?

What does this exercise teaches us about the perception of society on people with disabilities?

What did you learn from this activity?

Which of the strategies that were presented are more easy to apply to real life

Which are more difficult and why?

Card # 1

Situation: A group of friends plan to gather at Antonia's place one evening. One of them wants to invite Andrea, who has a disability. The others oppose this idea, thinking her presence will ruin the fun.

Card # 2

Situation: During the class break, a group of students sees a colleague with disabilities passing by. They start making fun of him/her. One of them disagrees with this attitude.

Card # 3

Situation: The students of a classroom find out that they will have a new colleague, facing some disability. They oppose the idea as they think it will be a problematic situation for the classroom. One of them disagrees with this.

Card # 4

Situation: Maria is a student with disabilities. During the breaks she is alone, as none of her colleague feels like hanging out with her. Some of them would like to engage with her, but they fear the reaction of their colleagues.



Handout Training pupils for offering support

How to provide assistance to a colleague having visual impairments

- I would rather you asked me whether I need help or not. I am a normal person, I just cannot see;
- When you encounter me or another person with visual impairments, make your presence felt. For example, say “hello” by touching my arm;
- In the beginning, until I can recognize your voice, please identify yourself when we meet, along with anyone else who enters the conversation. When you leave, please say so;
- It is easier to walk with you than with the cane. Let me hold your elbow and tell you myself the way I prefer you to escort me. You should always be one step ahead, in order for me to follow you easily. Do not forget that your body is my shield in this situation;
- Do not forget to tell me whether I am about to go up or get down the stairs or the pavement. When we come to a door, please mention how it opens (in or out, left or right);
- Lead my hand on a chair so I can sit. Let me know if there are things or obstacles on the floor and at the height of my head which are dangerous. It is also important to know who is in the room with me;
- If you help me get a taxi, show me the door and I can get in. If I want to get on the bus, help me find the first step and the handle;
- Help me discretely while having a meal by telling me about the food on my dish. Tell me, using my dish as a “clock”, where my food is. Please offer to read the menu, including the prices;
- Make sure you give clear instructions. Use identifications, such as front-back and right-left.

- Use your natural tone as talking to any other person. Be yourself, relax, and speak directly to me in a normal tone of voice;
- Words associated with vision are not taboo. I use them myself as well. Seeing means feel, understand, touch. Still, avoid pointing and other visual language (“the book is over there,” for example). Feel free to talk about visual entertainment, such as sports, television and movies. Blind people have the same interests as sighted people. If you include them in conversation, everyone will have a better time;
- As any other person, I have my preferences in all aspects of life. I like theatre, cinema, trips, partying and discussions;



- You may think that you ought to protect me, take all precautions and become my guardian angel, but I would like to tell you that I am still like any other person who can see, autonomous and independent;
- I do not seek your pity but your friendship!
- You should not ask the person who escorts me for something that concerns me;
- Do not pet or talk to guide dogs while they are working (in harness). It can be distracting.

As you can see, it's easy. When you meet someone who is blind or with visual impairment, just be yourself, use common sense, and just let the rest happen.