Child Friendly Space (CFS)

Gender Equality Activities Curriculum for Children aged 2-11 years old

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Fostering Equality from The Start:

The Significance of Gender Equality in Children's Development

A Practical Guide for The Growth of Gender Equality in Early Childhood Development through Specific Activities for Children Aged from 2 To 11 Years Old.

Introduction

Welcome to the *Gender Equality Curriculum for Children!*

This Curriculum has been developed in the framework of the project **"CARE: Community-Based Primary Prevention of GBV in Greece and Italy"**, which is co-funded by the EU Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV-2022-DAPHNE) and is implemented by the International Rescue Committee (IRC) Hellas and Italy, Caritas Hellas, Centro Penc and Global Girl Media Greece.

The project aims to contribute towards the prevention of gender-based violence (GBV) against women and girls, with a focus on Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), in Greece and Italy. A number of community-based interventions for women and men have been designed, intending to improve learning on gender related issues and empower vulnerable members of the community.

Child-friendly spaces (CFSs) are integral to the project in both Greece and Italy, offering a safe and nurturing environment where children not only play and socialize but also engage in learning about gender equality, while their parents/caregivers are engaged in other project activities that equally promote women's empowerment and gender equality.

The *Gender Equality Curriculum for children* forms part of the CFS material. It entails a series of learning activities on gender equality and games for children aged from 2 to 11 years old. Activities are presented

under three sections that link cognitive, emotional, and social learning and associate self-perceptions on gender with sociocultural aspects of its expressions:

- Knowing ourselves and other children
- Emotions and gender
- Gender roles in society

The curriculum aims to aspire educators, CFS facilitators and children's trainers to incorporate a gender perspective when implementing educational and recreational activities; While valuable resources on promoting gender equality to children are available, there is a limited number of complete guides offering a bundle of interlinked activities that promote gender equality for both pre-school and primary school children.

Following a gender transformative approach, the *Gender Equality Curriculum* for children seeks to set the stage and help children challenge gender stereotypes, respect diversity, and contribute to a world where all individuals are treated with dignity and have equal opportunities to thrive.

By embracing the principles outlined hereby, we hope to work together to challenge and transform harmful gender norms, roles, and relations, and pave the way towards a more gender-equal society.

Who is this Curriculum for

Gender identity development is a multidimensional process that begins in early childhood. By the age of three, children are already introduced to main gender norms and attitudes. As they enter primary education, they have acquired a sense of how they are expected to behave, be valued, and the roles they should assume, shaped by their observations and adjustments to gender norms.

Integrating gender equality education into early childhood activities is crucial for fostering healthy gender perceptions. Equally important is the creation of interventions for middle childhood that challenge established norms and encourage questioning of dominant gender stereotypes.

Building on these insights, the Gender Equality Curriculum offers a series of engaging, interactive, and straightforward activities designed to help educators, CFS facilitators, and trainers incorporate gender equality into their teaching procedures. Targeted activities have been designed separately for early childhood children (2-6 years old) and middle childhood children (7-11 years old) each adapted to the respective cognitive and developmental stages and abilities of these age groups. The material focuses on raising awareness of gender equality. Moreover, it is designed to empower facilitators to recognize, record, examine and reduce the use of gender stereotypes.

Evaluation tools and guidelines in conflict management are also included, enhancing the practicality of this curriculum and allowing facilitators and trainers to implement the activities effectively and assess their impact.

The Gender Transformative Approach: Building Agents of Change

This curriculum was developed using a Gender Transformative Approach (GTA). GTA entails a set of intersectoral and multilevel actions, that challenge harmful gender norms, roles, and relationships, to achieve a more equitable distribution of power, resources, and services.

It seeks to address the root causes of gender-based discrimination and violence, rather than simply addressing the symptoms or surface-level manifestations of these issues. Beyond raising gender awareness, GTA aims to transform societal patterns, reduce gender inequalities and empower communities and individuals to shift from perpetuating stereotypes to becoming proactive agents in diminishing gender-based disparities.

Fostering the gender transformative approach in designing activities for children contributes to raising awareness of their potential beyond their gender, enabling a gradual reassessment of conventional views, stereotypes, and restrictive notions. The primary objective is to provide educators, children, and communities with tools to actively participate in building a gender-equitable future. This involves questioning and deconstructing gender roles and biases, transforming harmful gender norms, and promoting respect for diversity.

The key to effectiveness in such initiatives is to create safe and open environments, where children can explore their interests and potential, without being confined by gender stereotypes. Such environments should foster self-expression, individual exploration, and the cultivation of respect for others, transcending gender, nationality, and language barriers; thus becoming active agents of transformation and change.

Understanding the Content: Definitions

Child Friendly Space (CFS). A Child-Friendly Space (CFS) is a designated area that secures the well-being and development of children, particularly in challenging environments. Key characteristics of a CFS include safety and security, play and learning, parent support, cultural sensitivity, non-discrimination, and psychosocial support by trained facilitators. Furthermore, a CFS fosters inclusion and an environment that promotes equality and respect. CFSs can additionally boost families' ability to support children by aiding parents or other guardians in fostering positive communication with their kids, overcoming existing stress, and cultivating their aspirations for themselves and their children for the time ahead. Child-friendly spaces can play an important role in identifying and addressing child protection concerns within an affected population, including the detection of issues or threats to children and youth and appropriate, safe referrals to ensure these concerns are addressed in the best way possible. (Save the Children, 2009).

Gender-based-Violence (GBV) and violence against women and girls (VAWG) are two terms that are often used interchangeably, as most violence against women is inflicted (by men) for gender-based reasons and gender-based violence affects women disproportionately (Council of Europe). Gender-

based violence can include sexual, physical, mental and economic harm inflicted in public or private spheres. It also includes threats of violence, coercion, and manipulation. This can take many forms such as intimate partner violence, sexual violence, child marriage, female genital mutilation and so-called 'honour crimes'. The physical, psychological, and social consequences of gender-based violence are devastating and can have life-long repercussions for survivors. It can even lead to death. (UNHCR, n.d).

Gender Equality in Learning is obtained when the same percentage of girls and boys, always relative to their age group, gain access to the educational system, achieve educational goals and advance through different educational circles. Equality is the whole process of treating, educationally, girls and boys in the same way and fairly. To ensure this kind of fairness, many measures should be taken into consideration including historical and social problems and disadvantages that enhance conflict between girls and boys (UNESCO, 2003).

Gender equality requires equal access of women, men, girls, boys and gender minorities to goods, resources, opportunities, and rewards. It implies that everyone, regardless of their gender, shares an equal level of respect and the same status in society. (UNFPA, 2005).

Gender equity is the act of treating everyone fairly, women, men, girls, boys, and people with diverse – nonbinary gender identities. Strategies and procedures must be accessible to ensure fairness. Equality results from equity. (UNFPA, 2005). Gender equality is giving all genders equal treatment when it comes to rights, responsibilities and opportunities. Gender equity, meanwhile, is about fairness. It ensures that everyone has equal opportunities while taking into consideration privileges, biases and other parameters that can limit how people access opportunities.

Gender has been identified as a social construction which includes the characteristics, roles, and behaviours that certain societal forms expect from men and women, boys, and girls. These components, behaviors and roles are learned and acquired early in life, through multiple social mechanisms since childhood and expand to the whole adult life (Rolleri, 2013).

Gender norms are expectations and rules regarding how men and women should behave in society, express themselves and interact with others according to their gender (United Way NCA, 2023).

Gender Stereotype is a widely held belief or generalization about the behaviors, characteristics and roles performed by women and men. For example, female stereotypical roles include being emotional, caring and in need of protection, while male stereotypical roles include being rational, career driven

and strong. Gender stereotypes are neither universal nor static. They are culturally ascribed and, as such, can vary from one culture to another and over time.

Multicultural education describes a variety of programs and educational techniques that are related to education equity of different ethnic groups, women, minorities, low-income groups as well as people with mental or physical disabilities. The goal is to contain all people who have been historically underrepresented or socially marginalized. Instructors and educators ought to understand each student's or group's special background to provide classes and courses, specially designed for their needs (Banks and Banks, 2019). Managing a group of children with different background, language skills and origins, entails developing an enabling environment through practicing cultural sensitivity, incorporating elements of diversity in planned cultural and educational activities, -e.g., music, dance etc.-, giving participants freedom and flexibility and actively engaging caregivers/ parents in the activities.

Non-Formal Education has a non-formal character, and plays an additional, alternative, or complementary role to formal education in the process of lifelong and ongoing education for individuals. The main purpose is to ensure access to education for all. It addresses all age groups of people, it does not follow a specific structure and is often applied in the form of short courses, seminars, workshops, programs of skills, work skills and cultural development. (ISCED, 2011).

Sex refers to the physical differences between people who are male, female, or intersex. A person typically has their sex assigned at birth based on physiological characteristics, including their genitalia and chromosome composition. (Newman Tim, 2023).

How to use this Curriculum

This curriculum includes a set of 10 activities, for early and middle childhood children (2-6 and 7-11 years old respectively). For early childhood activities, tips are provided on how activities can be adjusted to meet the needs and skills of participants from the youngest age group from 2 to 4 years old.

Activities per age group fall under the following thematic sections:

1. **Understanding ourselves and others**

2. **Emotions and gender**
3. **Gender roles in the family and society**

Additionally, supplementary activities on conflict resolution are included to equip facilitators with strategies for managing group conflicts. Educators can implement the curriculum in its entirety for comprehensive learning or select specific activities to meet particular educational goals.

It can serve as a valuable educational resource for educators, facilitators and children's trainers who want to introduce a gender perspective element to their projects. Any of the activities/sections can be implemented separately or combined according to the needs and priorities of the instructor/s. However, it is recommended to implement the full curriculum in sequence to achieve greater impact. In this case, activities have been designed to run once per week – on predefined days and times - as part of a CFS or other educational structure that hosts a closed group of children. If there is rotation of the children (such as within an open CFS), activities can be implemented again but with a twist (e.g., by using different versions of the concepts, stories, sound, and visual material each activity includes).

Engaging the parents/caregivers in the process is also highly recommended. Facilitators are encouraged to hold an introductory session with the parents or caregivers to explain the curriculum's concept and objectives. Continuous communication with them throughout the program is also beneficial.

The curriculum provides detailed information on each activity on:

- **Goal**: clarifies the activity's purpose and desired outcomes.
- **Materials**: lists required resources for conducting the activity.
- **Recommended number of participants (children):** Provide suggestions on the recommended number of participant children. If the number of participants exceeds the suggested maximum, make sure sufficient space and staff are available for support.
- **Number of facilitators/ suggested specialities of facilitators**: provides information on the number of trainers/ facilitators required for the implementation of the activity. It also provides recommendations on the expertise that would be most appropriate to run the activity.

- **Average duration**: provides an estimated timeframe for each activity, including adjustments for group size and time constraints.
- **Before you start**: includes information on what needs to be done before implementing the activity. Space, material preparation etc.
- **Description**: includes step-by-step instructions on how the trainer should set up the activity and how it should be carried out/played.
- **Reflection**: includes age-appropriate tips and discussion that can help the facilitators understand if the message of the activity has been understood by the children. The reflection is part of the activity and facilitators need to make sure to have sufficient time to do it.

The activities can be implemented in any space and/or location that meets all safety requirements for the children involved and is in line with all established regulations. The chosen spaces must be ample, inviting, culturally respectful, and conducive to the activities.

For the implementation of each activity, sufficient staff should always be involved. For the safety and safeguarding of the children and the smooth operation of the activities, at least two facilitators need to be present. All facilitators need to be appropriately trained in the safety of the children and the safeguarding policies of the implementing organization.

For general safety and safeguarding guidelines, as well as requirements for the operation of CFS, you can consult the following toolkits:

- ChildFundAlliance: Child- Friendly -Spaces toolkit (https://shorturl.at/xAPRT)
- CRS: MEAL 4Kids: Child Friendly Spaces Checklist (https://shorturl.at/zGHLP)

The Role of the Facilitators

This Curriculum focuses on supporting educators, CFS facilitators and children's trainers who wish either to implement a full circle of activities on gender equality or wish to introduce the concept of gender equality in their actual educational and recreational activities.

Skilled facilitators are key for the successful implementation of the activities. Involving facilitators with relevant pedagogical backgrounds in early/middle childhood is required. Sufficient knowledge of the cognitive level of the children per age group is important to be able to identify the specific needs, potentials, and skills of the children but also to appropriately organize and adjust the suggested activities. If available, it is recommended to also involve staff of other relevant expertise (see the description of each activity for details). The facilitators should have sufficient knowledge of gender-related issues and in areas of child protection, Gender Based Violence and trauma-informed care. Relevant training for the staff involved needs to be available and provided.

Moreover, the facilitators should be skilled in analyzing, and acknowledging gender power dynamics and managing imbalanced participation in the activities (e.g., to be able to give enough space and time to boys and girls to speak out). It is also important to be able to work with children of diverse cultural backgrounds and to create an environment that is more gender sensitive.

Facilitators must challenge their own unconscious bias and have interpersonal abilities that will help foster thoughtful conversations over traditional practices. Their presence significantly contributes to the effectiveness of the activities of the toolkit designed to promote gender transformation.

Managing Emotional Difficulties and Conflict

A child may become emotionally charged during the activities or feelings from the past may arise and there may be a disagreement amongst children or a violent act by a child that upsets the group of children.

Giving children the time and space to express their feelings in a welcoming environment is crucial when they are under emotional stress. One educator must remain with the struggling child in a quiet spot away from the group and support the child in managing their emotions. Particularly, it's critical that the teacher respects the child's feelings and lets them know that they're okay. The child's emotion is acknowledged and accepted, and they support the child in expressing it without worrying about rejection.

Once the child has had the opportunity to express themselves and the immediate emotional intensity has diminished, they should be gently encouraged to rejoin the group, ensuring they feel ready to continue with the activity. Additionally, should conflicts or communication issues arise within the group, the following are some recommended strategies and activities designed to enhance group communication.

Before starting: Facilitation Tips

- Set with the children the rules and expectations for respectful behaviour and language. Discuss and include confidentiality issues. Draw or write the rules and place them in a visible area of the space.
- Encourage questions, comments, and contributions from all children. Use questions throughout the implementation of the activity (e.g., What will you do first? What do you think will happen next? What inspired you? What was the most interesting part of the activity? Would you do something different next time?). Create a space for open discussions where children can share their thoughts, feelings, and questions about gender equality. Use open questions and probing questions. Avoid interrupting the children and avoid judgmental attitudes.
- Aim for gender-inclusive groups for collaborative tasks, and when possible, pair boys and girls together to promote equality and cooperation.
- Promote fair play and integrity among the children.
- Help children understand the importance of treating everyone with kindness and respect. All children must be aware of the spirit of healthy competition. Whether they win or lose, they must be humble and not make fun of their classmates.
- Practice active listening, try to listen, observe and understand the feelings of the children throughout the process.
- Adopt and observe body language that reflects openness, warmth, and empathy to foster a supportive atmosphere.
- Recognize that discussions about gender may elicit strong emotions among the children.

- Create a safe environment to discuss feelings and challenging situations. Take into consideration the limits of the group sessions and what can and cannot be safely discussed within this group.
- Continuously integrate discussions on gender equality, tailored to be age-appropriate and ongoing.

Extra tips for ages 2-4

- Maintain a fun and enthusiastic atmosphere to keep children engaged and motivated.
- Provide clear and age-appropriate instructions, keeping them simple and easy to understand.
- Include materials that engage their senses, such as colourful visuals, tactile elements, or familiar sounds.
- Keep in mind that children in this age group learn best through play, exploration, and hands-on experiences.
- Enhance opportunities for physical activities to encourage expression and keep their interest.
- Offer one-on-one support or assistance as needed, especially for tasks that may be challenging for early childhood. Make sure you have at least one facilitator to focus, support and help children participate in the activities appropriately adjusted for this age group. If possible, have one facilitator dedicated to supporting children of this age group.
- Establish a clear routine for the activities, helping children feel secure and oriented.
- If an activity is too long, consider dividing it into smaller segments.
- Children's levels of attention may vary and may need time to adjust to each activity.
- Include storytelling in the activities to make them more engaging and relatable for young children.
- Show visual examples to help children understand the activity's concept.

Section 1: Getting to Know Ourselves and Other Children

Activities for 2-6 years old

Building Together

Goal: ice-breaking game to get to know each other and feel comfortable

Materials: colourful building blocks

Recommended number of participants (children): 4-12

Recommended number/specialities of facilitators: one preschool teacher and one educator. It is advisable to have a third facilitator.

Average duration: 30 minutes

Before you start: Place a big table/ tables.

Description: Gather children around a big table with colorful bricks in the centre. Explain to the children that they will be building a common construction together. Start by asking one question per round from the list below. Each child, when answering, can choose a brick of their preference from the centre and add it to the common construction. Suggested questions:

- What is your name?
- What's your favorite color?
- Do you have a favorite animal?
- What's your favorite game to play?
- What's your favorite food?

Reflection: Conclude the activity by asking them to point out one similarity they found or can find with peers. Talk about the colorful construction pointing out that the colors have no gender preference.

Tips for younger ages! Use pictures and drawings alongside the questions to help children understand and respond. For example, use printouts of different animals and ask children to chose their favorite.

The mirror game: how similar are we?

Goal: get familiar with each other, and observe similarities.

Materials: small plastic mirrors.

Recommended number of participants (children): 10-12

Recommended number/specialities of facilitators: one preschool teacher and one educator. It is advisable to have a third facilitator (suggested to be a psychologist).

Average duration: 45 minutes

Before you start: find as many small plastic mirrors as the number of children participating in the activity.

Description: pair up the children and distribute a mirror to each. Instruct them to look at themselves and their partner in the mirror. Guide them with questions to notice and reflect on both the differences and similarities in features, styles, and expressions. Encourage each child to identify one similarity with their partner and share it with the group.

Reflection: ask each pair to present the similarities. Point out the similarities in the whole group by asking questions prompting them to compare, such as: Do we all have the same hairstyle, hair colour, eye colour, characteristics e.t.c? Discuss the differences we might have. Point out the similarities observed regardless of the gender.

Tips for younger ages! Use a child-friendly mirror that's not too big or intimidating. Start by showing each child their reflection and saying something positive about them. For example, "Look at your beautiful eyes!" Encourage children to touch or point to their facial features, such as eyes, nose, and mouth, and mention their names. Use simple language to explain differences and similarities. You can say, "We all have eyes, but some are blue, and some are brown. Isn't that great?"

Activities for 7-11 years old

Collage "Myself"

Goal: get to know each other, feel comfortable and explore our similarities.

Materials: markers and coloured pencils, paper, cardboard, glue, scissors, photos from reading material (e.g., children's magazines and cartoons) or other available resources.

Recommended number of participants (children): 10-12

Recommended number/specialities of facilitators: One teacher and one educator. It is advisable to have a third facilitator (suggested to be a psychologist).

Average Duration: 50-60 minutes

Before you start: Organize space with table(s).

Description: Gather the children at the table(s) and provide them with the collage and painting materials. Give them a piece of A3 paper and ask them to make a collage to describe themselves. Ask them to write their names and draw the outline of their hand. Then ask them to draw or glue their favourite people and place, their favourite activity. That, gives a chance to every child to share his/her interests with the others.

Put the children in a circle and ask them to introduce themselves by showing and describing their collage.

Reflection: ask each child to share one similarity they noticed between their collage with someone else's in the group. For example, "I saw that both Maria and I love playing basketball!". Encourage more interaction between boys and girls with similar experiences or interests and let them share their findings.

Together we can do it!

Goal: to foster a sense of camaraderie among children and open a dialogue on teamwork transcending gender boundaries.

Materials: no extra materials required. Open space outdoors or indoors

Recommended number of participants (children): 10-12

Recommended number/specialities of facilitators: one teacher and one educator. It is advisable to have a third facilitator (suggested to be a psychologist).

Average duration: 45 minutes

Before you start: arrange sufficient open space.

Description: place the children sitting on the ground with their feet flat. Ask the children to try to stand up without using their hands or any other material available in the space, stepping only on their feet. Give the children up to 10 minutes for this attempt. Then ask the children to pair with another child and repeat the activity. Give the children another 10 minutes to try and stand up. If they face difficulties, instruct them to be placed back-to-back and then try to stand up.

Reflection: put the children in a circle and discuss their experiences. Ask children to share with the group how they felt when trying alone and when in pairs. What was different and what was the result in each case? How did they feel? Point out that the result was achieved regardless of the gender. T Connect the exercise outcomes to everyday life, encouraging thoughts on how teamwork can enhance daily tasks and interactions.

Section 2: Emotions and Gender

Activities for 2-6 years old

The wheel of emotions

Goal: help children explore and understand different emotions

Materials: cardboard wheel with fixed arrow and printed out pictures of facial expressions

Recommended number of participants (children): 10-12

Recommended number/specialities of facilitators: One preschool teacher and one facilitator recommended to be a psychologist/child protection specialist /social worker. It is advisable to have a third facilitator.

Average duration: 45 minutes

Before you start: Make a wheel of cardboard with a fixed arrow (table-based or wall-based), where each section presents one basic emotion. Use gender-free printed face expressions to represent each emotion or emotion. Note that this activity might trigger emotions in children. Make sure to have adequately trained facilitators to be able to handle difficult emotions with children.

Description: Place children in a circle**.** Ask each child to turn the wheel and guess the feeling, pointed by the arrow. Each child then imitates the same feeling using their face and body. Ask the other children to identify the emotion presented.

Reflection: Give examples of different situations that can trigger the emotions shared in the activity. Engage children in completing sentences related to different emotions triggered by specific situations (e.g., "When I eat sweets, I feel...", "When I stub my toe, I feel..."). Highlight the universality of emotions, underscoring that feelings like happiness, sadness, and anger transcend gender distinctions.

Tips for younger ages! Firstly, show children what exactly they have to do, by spinning the wheel multiple times and imitating your feelings by yourself, so they can follow by encouraging them.

Our different faces our common emotions

Goal: Explore the world of emotions, and understand that all people can experience similar emotions regardless of their gender.

Materials: paper, coloured markers.

Recommended number of participants (children): 10

Recommended number/specialities of facilitators: one preschool teacher and one facilitator recommended to be a psychologist/ child protection specialist /social worker. It is advisable to have a third facilitator.

Average duration: 50 minutes

Before you start: organize the sitting table/s

Description: children sit at the table(s). Give the children a piece of paper in an oval shape reminding them of a human face. Ask the children to draw them with different expressions (happy, funny, angry, feared etc.). Ask them to give a name to each one, to tell what their gender is, and to think of what the face is feeling. Ask them to present their views.

Place an A3 paper on the wall with emoticons of basic facial expressions next to each other. Mix all the children's creations in a basket, have each child draw one at random, and match it with the emoticons on the wall.

Reflection: observe the faces placed under each emoticon. Discuss the faces the children drew and name the emotions. Note that under all emotions there are faces of all genders. Point out that the emotions represented could be felt by anyone, regardless of gender.

Tips for younger ages! Instead of asking young children to explore a wide range of emotions, focus on a few basic ones that they can easily understand, such as happy, sad, angry, and surprised. Keep it simple to prevent overwhelming them. Provide visual cues or templates with basic facial expressions to help children get started. These can include simple drawings of eyes, mouths, and eyebrows that they can color to express different emotions.

Activities for 7-11 years old

Guess my emotion

Goal: understand and recognize emotions and their different intensity. Help children become familiar with the expression of their own emotions.

Materials: no materials needed.

Recommended number of participants: (children): 10-12

Recommended number/specialities of facilitators: educator and psychologist/ child protection specialist/social worker.

Average duration: 50-60 minutes

Before you start: make colourful cards naming different emotions.

Description: place cards of different emotions in a basket. Place more cards with emotions than the number of children. Ask each child to pick one card and try to present the emotion using pantomime. They can choose another emotion from the basket if they do not feel confident or comfortable with the one they have initially picked up.

Prompt the group to guess the emotions being portrayed. Further the discussion by exploring when and why these emotions might be experienced, encouraging children to draw from personal situations.

Reflection: Encourage the children to talk about their own experiences with the emotions they played out. Point out that all feelings are experienced and expressed in similar ways by boys and girls as well.

What about gender equality?

Goal: start a discussion about gender equality. Allow children to share their thoughts and emotions on it.

Materials: laptop/ projector

Suggested number of participants (children): 10-12

Recommended number/specialties of facilitators: one educator and one psychologist/ child protection specialist/ social worker.

Average duration: 45 minutes

Before you start: arrange a relaxing sitting area for the children.

Description: use audio-visual material to initiate a discussion on gender and gender equality. A few short videos on gender equality will be shown. Followed by an open discussion (what they understood, what impressed them, what they didn't like, what they believed).

Reflection: Allocate some dedicated time for the children to write or draw their reflections, thoughts, and emotions inspired by the videos. Encourage them to jot down the received key messages, and questions that arose. Finally, encourage each child to share their creation with the rest of the group.

Links to suggested videos:

- https://youtu.be/TWvJ3Dd2Y9M?si=O9qElWWaep20lJ-
- https://youtu.be/OLtsMicgZjI?si=zDiNw9d3k8MJ1fUM

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ilFvvFR_wAU
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b2OcKQ_mbiQ
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ulh0DnFUGsk&list=PLgjdH6tAFz-FYpKJSboe3pcrkuRPgmOst

Section 3: Genders and the Society

Activities for 2-6 years old

Fun in the House

Goal: to get to know and engage in various household chores/ activities and to understand that taking care of the house and everyday chores can have no gender.

Materials: age-appropriate cleaning supplies (e.g., child-sized broom, dustpan, mop, soft cloth), clothing (e.g., aprons, overalls, gloves, bags, uniforms), Kitchen toys (e.g., cooking toys, safe tools), toy screwdrivers and gardening toys.

Suggested number of participants (children): 2-8

Recommended number/specialities of facilitators: one preschool teacher and one educator. It is advisable to have a third facilitator.

Average duration: 45 minutes

Before you start: arrange the play equipment centrally within the area, and place costume items in a nearby basket. Designate different play zones with colour-coded labels representing various "household units" (e.g., "Blue House," "Green House") throughout the space.

Description: separate children into pairs. Tell children that today, they will have a fun "Family Day" where they get to help with some basic household tasks. Ask them to choose from the available toys a specific number, depending on availability, to help with a specific household activity. Place children into the different household units and ask them to complete a specific activity in their household, depending on the toys they choose. Give them 15 minutes to play for this task. Then ask them to exchange toys and roles. Give them another 15 minutes to play with the other toys and fulfil this task.

Reflection: gather children together. Discuss the activity by asking specific questions like:

- "What did you like mostly playing with?"
- "How did you feel when you changed toys? Did you like it?"
- "Were you aware that both boys and girls can perform these tasks?"

Tips for younger ages! Select household tasks that are age-appropriate and easy for young children to understand and perform. For example, setting a table, picking up toys, or pretend sweeping. Start by demonstrating the tasks yourself or with the help of a facilitator.

When I grow up, I want to be ....

Goal: to reinforce the idea in young children that they can aspire to take on any career or role they choose regardless of gender.

Materials: animated pictures or cards of boys and girls in different professions, easy for the children to understand (e.g., doctor, teacher, cook, singer), large poster board or a whiteboard, markers, crayons, or coloured pencils, Sticky notes or adhesive labels.

Recommended number of participants (children): 4-12

Recommended number/specialities of facilitators: one preschool teacher and one educator. It is advisable to have a third facilitator.

Average duration: 45 minutes

Before you start: place animated pictures or cards on the board. Choose as many pictures as possible and different occupations that children of this age can mostly relate to. If possible, try to use pictures of women in traditional male occupations and vice versa.

Description: form a circle with the children and introduce the various professions, discussing their key traits and asking if the children know anyone in these roles. Distribute sticky notes or labels for children to mark their preferred profession, encouraging them to explore interests beyond traditional gender expectations (for example, discussing the possibility of girls aspiring to become firefighters).

Reflection: Ask each child which of the occupations they do not want to do and why. Ask them if they can imagine anybody in the class doing that profession and encourage them to explain why. Emphasize that everybody can be whatever they dream of regardless of gender.

Tips for younger ages! Share less and simple cards of occupations, use only animated neutral gender pictures of occupations. (e.g., animals in different occupations, girls in traditional boys' roles). Explain in simple words what each occupation does and engage the children in a discussion about roles. Ask questions like: "What would you like to be when you grow up?" Tell them that all people can be whatever they dream of.

Games for all

Goal: to encourage children to engage in various group games, fostering the understanding that play knows no gender boundaries.

Materials: ball for Football, basketball (if basket available), rope, rhythmic hoop (hula hoop).

Recommended number of participants (children): 4-10

Recommended number/specialities of facilitators: two preschool teachers. It is advisable to have a third facilitator (suggested to be a sports trainer).

Average Duration: 45 minutes

Before you start: set up designated areas, such as the "soccer area," "rope jumping area," and "hula hoop area." Make sure each area is well-defined with markers or cones.

Description: begin by gathering all the children in a circle and explaining the activity. Each group should have one facilitator. Assign each group to one of the designated areas and instruct them how to play the respective game (e.g., basketball, rope jumping, hula hooping, soccer). Give them 10 minutes to play this game. After the time is up, blow a whistle or use another signal to indicate that it's time for the groups to move to the next activity area. Ensure that all groups have the opportunity to try each game.

Reflection: lead a conversation about the games the children played and how they were all suitable for everyone, regardless of gender. Ask questions starting with what game they liked the most. Ask them

if they engaged with games they have not played in the past and if they liked them. Highlight the importance of treating everyone equally and with respect. Emphasize that there are no games specifically for "boys" or "girls" but that all games are for all children to enjoy.

Tips for younger ages! Choose games that have simple rules and are easy for young children to understand. Games like rolling a ball or passing a hoop can work well.

Let's go fashionistas

Goal: to challenge stereotypes surrounding clothing choices and promote the understanding that clothing is universal, not confined by gender.

Materials: white and colored paper, colored markers, different printed clothing designs, scissors, glue, tape, big sitting table. (If available you can use magnetic versions of human figures and clothes)

Recommended number of participants (children): 10-12

Recommended number/specialties of facilitators: preschool teacher and one facilitator. It is advisable to have a third facilitator.

Average duration: 60 minutes

Before you start: Cut the paper into human body figures. Make two figures for each child. Cut also different styles of children's clothes (magnetic body figures and clothes work just fine).

Description: children sit around the table and put at the centre all the paper clothes and scissors, glue and coloured paper. Give each child one paper body figure and ask them to draw a boy or a girl. Then tell them to use the available material to dress their figure the way a boy or a girl would normally dress for a party. Then, hand out the second figure, encouraging children to dress this one in any way they wish, emphasizing creativity and the use of vibrant colours. Allocate another 15 minutes for this part.

Reflection: ask children to put one figure next to the other. Tell them to observe them and then ask them which are the differences between the two. Why did they make the second one differently? Encourage the children to express their thoughts and feelings. Reinforce the idea that clothes are for everyone, and there are no "boy colours" or "girl colours in clothing."

Tips for younger ages! Choose magnetic version of clothes and body figures. Include only the first part of the activity. Dress the figures with the children in non-stereotypical ways.

Role-reverse in fairytales - A new story

Goal: to identify stereotypical roles and characters in any fairy tale or story.

Materials: one classic story or a fairytale (e.g., Sleeping Beauty, Snowwhite, Little Red Riding Hood)

Recommended number of participants (children): 10-12

Recommended number/specialities of facilitators: one preschool educator and one facilitator. It is advisable to have a third facilitator.

Average Duration: 45 minutes

Before you start: read the fairytale once reversing the roles of characters to get yourself familiar.

Description: gather the children in a circle. Choose a classic fairy tale, narrate it and make the children part of it. Ask them to share with you parts of the story, if they know it. Then tell them that you will reread the story but with a twist. Start the story presenting reversed gender roles. Ask children to participate in acting out part of the story and its dialogues.

Reflection: Identifying stereotypes: lead a conversation about the fairytale that was chosen, and the stereotypical roles and characters present in the story. Guide the discussion with questions like: "What change did you notice in the two versions of the story?" "How did you feel the twist in the story?" "Did the characters change?" "Which version did you like the most? Why? Did the story change?"

Discuss the significance of recognizing how we can change the way we think about how men/women, boys and girls are expected to react. Underline that it is not "either" "or"- but that a world of gender equality is a world where we shift together.

Tips for younger ages! Choose simple and easy to comprehend fairytales. Narrate the story directly with the twist.

Colorful co-creations

Goal: challenge stereotypical assumptions on gender preferences. Cooperate and discuss equality.

Materials: three to five white T-shirts, paint for clothes in different colours, big sitting table/s, cover for tables, painting brushes

Recommended number of participants (children): 6-10

Recommended number/specialties of facilitators: one preschool educator and one facilitator. It is advisable to have a third facilitator.

Average duration: 50-60 minutes

Before you start: organize a big sitting table/s and appropriate cover.

Description: put children into pairs. Give one T-shirt per pair. Ask each child to paint one side of the T-shirt. Let them paint freely using all available colors. They can create a common theme or draw their own. Give them 30 minutes to finalize the painting. Hang all T-shirt creations next to each other.

Reflection: invite each child to share the story behind their artwork and its significance. Encourage discussions about the diversity in their painting; and how can two separate parts be linked together. Discuss the different pallets of colors used by the children, observe their preferences, and point out that all colors are for all children.

Address any gender-related assumptions that might have influenced their colour choices. Emphasize that everybody can bring something different and the importance of accepting and respecting others' choices.

Tips for younger ages! Simplify the process. Children paint the outline of their hands in various non-stereotypical gender colors.

Activities for 7-11 years old

All equal, all different: Breaking Stereotypes Through Music

Goal: to appreciate diversity while combating gender stereotypes. Through music, we can build healthy human relationships.

Materials: a device to play music. Large open space required.

Recommended number of participants (children): 10-12

Number of facilitators/ Suggested specialities of facilitators: one educator and one facilitator.

Average Duration: 60- 90 minutes

Before you start: choose an adequate song, with simple lyrics that talk about equality and diversity.

Description: Introduce the activity by emphasizing the importance of respect and friendship across diverse backgrounds including race, religion, and gender. Teach the children the song, provide printed lyrics for those who can read, and incorporate simple gestures to enhance interaction and participation. Encourage practice until the children are comfortable with both the melody and the lyrics.

Have a short discussion about the song's message. Ask questions like:

What did you learn from the song?

Why is it important to treat everyone with kindness and respect?

Dance Choreography: Create a simple dance routine that goes along with the song's theme.

Break the dance into easy-to-follow steps suitable for different age groups.

Practice the dance together until the children are confident.

Perform the song and dance, emphasizing the message of diversity and gender equality.

Reflection: after the performance, gather the children and ask them how they felt about the activity and what they learned. Encourage them to share their thoughts and feelings about what matters most in human relationships.

Indicatively see below children's songs that could be used in the activity. However, depending on the composition of the group (age, language skills etc.) any song with relevant content may be used:

- English: https://youtu.be/vbHQ-OS9_G0?si=LdzyZe2owPDunlsb
- Greek: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LgDbiz5Fg6A
- Italian: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AIfUkhsA0BU

Dinner invitation

Goal: question equal participation in household activity.

Materials: clothing (e.g., aprons, gloves, bags), household items, including plastic cooking toys and cutlery. Two tables and chairs.

Recommended number of participants (children): 4-10

Recommended number/specialities of facilitators: one educator and one facilitator.

Average duration: 50 minutes

Before you start: make two separate areas including two sitting tables.

Description: divide children into household units. Tell children that every household has to invite the other to dinner. For this reason, they have to take on roles and start preparing. Distribute roles and tasks that each one has to undertake. When distributing roles and tasks, we make sure that the children are given tasks that are different from the stereotypical roles that the family members take according to their gender (e.g., a girl buys the products and a boy cooks the food).

Allow twenty minutes for this part of the activity. Then each household visits the other and sits for dinner. Allow 10 minutes for the exchange.

Reflection: initiate a discussion on the activity's experience, focusing on the children's feelings about the roles and tasks assigned. Engage them in a conversation about the importance of sharing household responsibilities and how it fosters teamwork, empowerment, and gender equality.

Take-home message: summarize the main message of the activity: sharing responsibilities in domestic tasks promotes teamwork, empowerment, and gender equality within the family.

Run towards equality

Goal: understand that professional and career development is beyond gender.

Materials: red tape, questions card. Outdoor space is required.

Recommended number of participants (children): 8-12

Recommended number/specialities of facilitators: one educator and one facilitator.

Average Duration: 45 minutes

Before you start: place red tape to set a finish line. Prepare a card with a set of questions (see below-suggested questions).

Description: divide children into two teams and line them up. Each pair of children has to start the race when it's their turn. The first child that finishes will have to answer a closed-ended question. If the child gives the correct answer, it steps aside. The child that comes second goes to the back in the line of its team. The winning team is the one that has all the players aside.

Suggested questions: "Can a girl be a pilot?", "Was the uranium discovered by a man or a woman? "Are there any women Prime- Ministers in Europe?" "Can a boy be the lead in a ballet performance? "Can a dad take leave from work when a baby is born?", "Can a boy become a nanny?" "Is there a professional men's- womens' mixed football team?", "Was it a man or a woman that opened the first fashion house?"

Reflection: discuss the correct answers, offering further insights into each topic. Conclude by emphasizing the core lesson: dismantling professional and career stereotypes enables a free exploration of individual talents and interests, irrespective of gender.

Our common building

Goal: promote collaboration and gender-free creativity

Materials: clay that dries on its own, plastic bowls, water, protective cover surface

Recommended number of participants (children): 2-10

Recommended number/specialities of facilitators: one educator and one facilitator.

Average Duration: 90 minutes

Description: divide children into pairs. Provide each pair with clay and plastic bowls. Explain that their task is to create two identical constructions with the clay, such as two houses. One child takes the role of the guide and the other follows the instructions. Once the pairs have completed their constructions, have them place the two constructions side by side. Invite the other children to guess whose creation is each one.

Reflection: initiate a dialogue on the essence of gender-neutral play and creativity, highlighting the activity's focus on collective creativity without gender constraints. Explore the value of moving beyond traditionally gendered activities to embrace inclusiveness and unity in creative endeavours.

Our superhero, your superpowers

Goal: understand that physical differences between genders exist, but achievements are not affected by them.

Materials: two A3 papers, coloured markers and pencils, A4 coloured cardboard, glue

Recommended number of participants (children): 4-10

Recommended number/specialities of facilitators: one educator and one facilitator.

Average duration: 90 minutes

Before you start: draw two human figures in the center of two A3 papers.

Description: Split the children into two groups, tasking one with creating a hero and the other with a heroine. Encourage them to brainstorm names, invent unique superpowers, and attribute skill levels (1-5) across various abilities such as strength, agility, speed, and sensory perceptions, ensuring the total does not surpass 20 points. Allocate half an hour for the teams to conceptualize and bring their characters to life. Following this, facilitate an exchange of the devised superpowers between the groups, without swapping the characters. Challenge each team to envisage and articulate the greatest deed their character could achieve in their community, equipped with the new abilities.

Reflection: make a common circle with all children. Discuss how each team chose the characteristics of their superhero/superheroine initially. Ask if something changed after the exchange of superpowers and discuss their achievements regardless of their gender.

Let's break the circle

Goal: understand the social circumstances which girls and boys have to face in their everyday lives and promote different ways to deal with them

Materials: questions prepared by the facilitators, big classroom suggested, paper, markers

Recommended number of participants (children): 2-10

Recommended number/specialities of facilitators: one educator and one facilitator

Average Duration: 60 minutes

Before you start: Divide the classroom into four different corners. Each corner should have a label made of the following statements: 1) Agree, 2) I don't know, 3) I'm thinking about it, 4) Disagree. Moreover, the educator and the facilitators should have already prepared the questions they are going to ask.

Description: children should move to one of the four corners of the classroom, after hearing the questions that the educator and the facilitators will ask. Suggested questions: 1) Dolls are only for girls to play with, 2) Boys don't cry, 3) Boys don't wear skirts, 4) A woman cannot be a boss, 5) Only boys play soccer, 6) Girls are weak and boys are strong, 7) Girls help their mothers; boys help their fathers, 8) it's better to be a girl than a boy, 9) When something goes wrong, boys are the first ones who should take the blame, 10) Boys are allowed to curse, but girls are not 11) Girls are smarter than boys, 12) Girls win in many games because they tend to cheat, 13) It's ok for boys to beat each other, while for girls it is not appropriate, 14) Boys are lazier than girls, 15) Girls are better in lying than boys.

Reflection: Following each question, facilitate a reflective discussion in the group, probing into the children's feelings about the diverse responses and their underlying reasons. Encourage dialogue on the relativity of "correct" answers and the importance of questioning and understanding personal and societal beliefs.

Activities to Improve Communication

During the process, you may face conflicts or gaps of communication inside the team. Below, there are multiple proposals or activities that could be used in order to help you enhance the level of communication inside the team.

Speaker and listener

Goal: to highlight the value of active listening and the impact of being heard.

Materials: no materials needed

Number of participants (children): 10-12

Recommended number/specialities of facilitators: one educator and one psychologist/child protection specialist/social worker

Average Duration: 45 minutes

Before you start: no extra preparation is required.

Description: divide the children into pairs and tell them to sit opposite each other. Tell one child to describe the things he/she likes to do and the child who listens to pay attention to the child speaking and repeat what they said. Reverse the roles, and tell the child who listens to do whatever they need to do for them not to listen to what the other child is saying.

Encourage a conversation about what helps and what makes it difficult to listen to someone talking to us and how we feel when someone is listening and/or not listening to us. Create a list of rules for good listening.

Reflection: talk about the experience of being a listener and actively focusing on the speaker's words and emotions.

Tips for younger ages! Simplify the activity. Use clear and straightforward language to explain the activity. For example, say, "Listening means paying attention when your friend talks.", "Imagine listening is like a fun game where we learn about each other.","We take turns talking and listening, just like playing a game.", etc.

Speaking without a voice

Goal: help children realize that we can all communicate well regardless of our differences.

Materials: no materials needed

Recommended number of participants (children): 10-12

Recommended number/specialities of facilitators: one educator and one psychologist/ child protection specialist/social worker.

Average Duration: 30 minutes

Before you start: no extra preparation is required.

Description: pair up the children and instruct them to communicate affirmative and negative responses ("yes" or "no") to each other through body language alone without using words.

The set of proposed questions would start as follows:

- Do you like....
- Would you like....

- Have you ever...

Each child continues the question as he/she wishes.

The aim is to enhance the non – verbal communication and exercise in the perception of feelings without using words. After the completion of the procedure , gather all children in a circle Discuss with them, how they felt during the activity and what was difficult for them. Encourage them to share their experiences and thoughts about non- verbal communication. This discussion could bring to light the importance of body language and sensitivity in the emotions during the communication.

Reflection: ask the children to share what they found difficult during the activity, such as interpreting non-verbal cues or understanding their partner's intentions.

Discuss any frustrations or misunderstandings that may have occurred. Following this, you could discuss any probable ways to solve those frustrations and misunderstandings. Encourage them to propose ideas for the amelioration of collaboration and communication with the others in the future. This, could include practices in order to avoid any possible misunderstandings, to maintain the increased attention to non- verbal cues or to develop the ability to listen to the others, carefully.

Tips for younger ages! Keep the non-verbal cues simple, like nodding for "yes" and shaking the head for "no." Demonstrate the gestures first and encourage children to imitate you.

How to Evaluate the Curriculum

After implementing the curriculum, it is important to receive feedback to improve the way it is used. It is suggested to receive feedback both from children as well as from the facilitators/ educators involved in the procedure.

Receiving feedback from children

Use interactive ways to get feedback from children. An activity is hereby suggested to measure the satisfaction of children aged 5-11, as they typically exhibit more advanced cognitive skills. For children aged 2-4, facilitators can observe their reactions, as well as the level of participation, through the implementation of the activities.

Suggested activity: draw it out.

Goal: receive feedback regarding the curriculum.

Materials: large poster paper, art supplies (markers, coloured pencils, crayons, and stickers with emojis), tape and glue.

Recommended number of participants (children): open to all children participating in the activities.

Recommended number/specialities of facilitators: one educator and one psychologist/ child protection specialist/social worker.

Average Duration: 45 minutes

Description: gather all the children around the table/s. Explain to the children that you want to know what they liked the most about the curriculum and how it made them feel. Emphasize that they are asked to express their thoughts through drawings and emojis. Distribute the art supplies to each child, including markers, coloured pencils, crayons, and a variety of stickers with emojis. Encourage the children to think about their favourite parts of the curriculum and how those parts made them feel. Remind them of the activities that have been conducted.

Ask them to draw a picture representing what they liked the most. It could be a specific activity, a character, or any aspect they found enjoyable. In addition to the drawings, invite the children to choose stickers of emojis that best express their satisfaction (happy faces, stars, hearts, etc.). Once the children have finished their drawings and added emojis, have them gather around the large poster paper and ask each child to share their artwork and briefly explain what they drew and why they liked it. Facilitate a group dialogue centred around the shared poster, extracting valuable feedback and insights on the curriculum's impact.

Receiving feedback from facilitators

It is important to receive feedback from the facilitators so that appropriate adjustments tailored to their specific needs can be introduced.

It is suggested to conduct a reflection workshop after the completion of the curriculum. Below an indicative workshop agenda is attached. An external facilitator to run the activity is required.

Workshop Agenda:

I. Introduction

- Warmly welcome participants and outline the workshop's objectives.
- Acknowledge the importance of feedback in improving the curriculum's impact on gender equality promotion.

II. Curriculum Goals and Objectives

- Review the curriculum's goals and objectives for promoting gender equality.
- Invite participants to share their firsthand experiences and the extent to which they believe the curriculum met its objectives.

III. Curriculum Content

- Reflect on the curriculum's content and materials used.
- Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum in engaging children.

IV. Implementation Challenges

- Share experiences and challenges faced during the implementation of the curriculum.
- Identify any logistical or practical difficulties encountered.

V. Impact and Outcomes

- Discuss the observed impact of the curriculum on the children.

VI. Age Appropriateness

- Consider the age-specific needs of children and how the curriculum addresses these needs.
- Discuss any adjustments or improvements that could be made to better suit different age groups.

VII. Feedback and Suggestions

- Encourage facilitators to share their feedback, concerns, and suggestions for improving the curriculum.
- Prompt discussion on potential modifications to enhance the curriculum's overall effectiveness.

VIII. Closing Remarks

- Summarize the main points discussed during the workshop.
- Express gratitude for the valuable input provided by the facilitators.

How to Measure the Impact of the Curriculum

Description of the procedure

Conducting pre-assessment and post-assessment is crucial when implementing a curriculum, serving to establish a baseline of participants' prior knowledge and attitudes, evaluate the curriculum's impact, and pinpoint areas needing refinement.

To assess the impact of the curriculum, it is essential to follow a systematic approach involving both pre-survey and post-survey evaluations after the curriculum's implementation, following the same procedure. Pre and post-surveys should be conducted through group discussions with the children and facilitators must meticulously record all responses given and also observe and note down relevant non-verbal communication. These group discussions would be better implemented in what we call Focus Group Discussions. (FGDs)

Upon gathering the data, responses should be categorized according to shared themes and insights, such as children's gender-based perceptions regarding objects, colours, professions, and clothing. Utilizing uniform criteria for clustering pre-survey and post-survey responses facilitates the identification and comparison of patterns, enabling a thorough assessment of the curriculum's impact through observed shifts.

This evaluation strategy is particularly suited for children aged 5-11, given their more developed cognitive abilities. For younger children aged 2-4, facilitators should concentrate on observing changes in behavior, especially regarding interactions, communication styles, and gender-based social

acceptance, during the curriculum's execution. These observations ought to be recorded as qualitative feedback within the survey results, contributing to the overall analysis.

Suggested set of pre-post survey questions.

Surveys should be facilitated in group discussions with children who participated in the activities. Gather the children in a group setting and introduce the pre-activity survey. Facilitators ask the questions in a simple way and note the different answers provided. It is recommended to have two facilitators overseeing the activity for effective implementation.

Do you think boys and girls are the same or different? Why?

_____

_____

___

Can you tell me some things that boys or girls usually like to do? Are there activities both boys and girls can enjoy together?

_____

_____

_____

Who are your favourite heroes or characters? Are they mostly boys or girls? Why do you like them?

_____

_____

_____

Do you think some clothes or colours are only for boys or girls? Why?

- Yes
- No

_____

_____

_____

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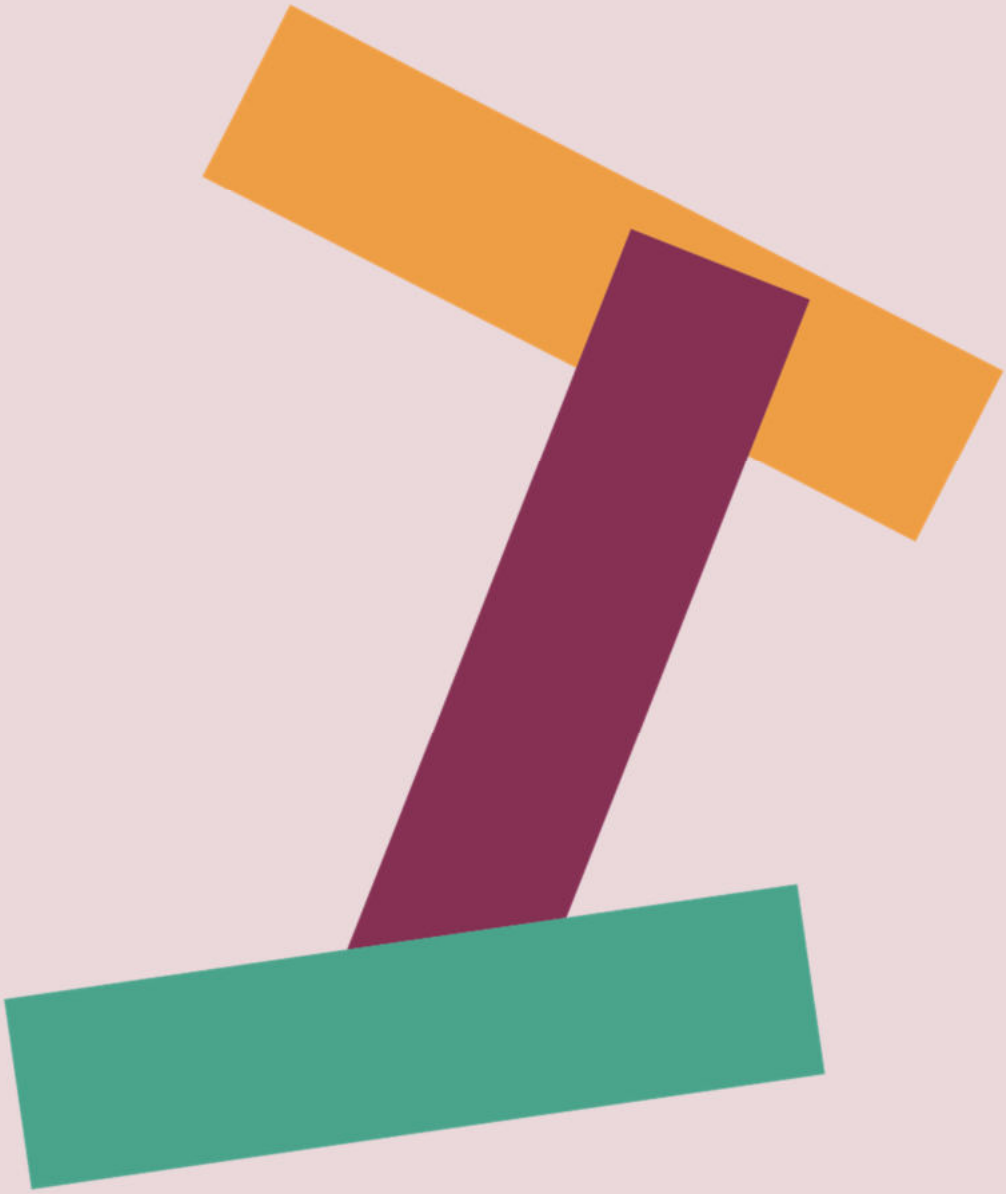
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