YARD4ALL

Using School's yard for ALL child's wellbeing & development

A child-to-child peer support model

November, 2020

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Programme

Yard4All - *Using school's yard for ALL child's wellbeing and development*

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www.yard4all-project.org

01

Introduction to the Yard4All project

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The convention on the rights of the children postulates that children have the right to education (Article 28) and education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full (Article 29). Improving the quality in education is also one of the sustainable goals that also need to be achieved by 2030.

The Yard4All is an Erasmus+ project that brings together nine partner organizations, and foresees the following objectives:

1. **Improve the learning quality of children**, using non-formal learning and teaching environments to promote more social contact between pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and pupils without impairments; develop innovative learning processes guided by a flexible curricula;

2. **Strengthen professionals' attitudes, skills and abilities, providing them training opportunities aligned with national - and local-level policy goals** for and understandings of inclusive education;

3. **Use an alternative learning environment** - school yards - to create an innovative methodology to develop ALL CHILDREN mathematics, science and other competences (e.g. entrepreneurship and creativity);

4. **Build on the existing resources following the principles of permaculture** in the economy of hydric resources, soil conservation, activation of the microbiological fauna and plague protection;

5. **Increase parents' and community's participation** by organizing local fairs of agro products in order to raise financial resources for the sustainability of the project (sell seeds and products, implementing principles of the Fair Trade). The objective is to use the yard of the school as a tool to increase teachers' skills and bring all children together. This is an opportunity for formal Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and non-formal education as well as quality and inclusive education.

The project includes five intellectual outputs (IO), namely:

IO1 - Open Digital Platform

IO2 - Child-to-child peer support model

IO3 - Business Marketing Guide for children

IO4 - Guide for using mathematical concepts on school yard

IO5 - Guide to develop science concepts on school yard

This document concerns IO2, which includes:

- **Peer support models:** Features and phases, and their adaptation to the distinctive aspects of disability.

- **Key lessons learned from the evidence**, including aspects of leadership, design and organization; support and supervision; skills and training; program longevity; issues of confidentiality; and risks.

- **School-based activities focusing on disability**, and on peer support interventions based on effectiveness of different models, strengths and weaknesses.

- **A literature review on children with Special Education Needs (SEN)**.

02

How can a peer to peer scheme be helpful for the Yard4all?

How can a peer to peer scheme be helpful for the Yard4all?

Peer support can be generally defined as a structured relationship where a trained person, or someone who has the knowledge (either from their own experiences with a certain condition, or of the circumstances of those he/she helps), assists other people with different needs (e.g., Coleman, Sykes and Groom, 2017; Davidson et al., 1999) using formal or informal approaches. In the literature it can be found a set of different concepts: peer support, peer mentoring, befriending and buddying.

A peer to peer program should provide emotional support (e.g. empathetic, caring interactions, encouragement), informational support (e.g. providing knowledge, advice, suggestions, including availability of relevant resources, alternative courses of action and guidance about effectiveness), and appraisal support (e.g. providing information to encourage personal decision-making and motivational aspects to encourage persistence and resilience).

In schools colleagues/peers supporters are responsible pupils providing support to their younger or same age through structured activities supervised by an adult. The central principle of peer support is that it can be helpful for children to receive support from their peers, rather than adults. In school settings with children with special needs, a peer support model can be considered as an intervention involving one or more classmates without impairments providing academic and/or social support to a student with SEN. Peer students can become the "teacher" by modeling appropriate behavior, interactions, expectations, perceptions, and learning schemes and when assisting special education pupils they can be also helpful with routine tasks.

Peer learning refers to *"the use of teaching and learning strategies in which students learn with and from each other without the immediate intervention of a teacher* (Boud, Cohen, & Sampson, 1999, p. 413). In peer learning the acquisition of knowledge and skills is achieved through active helping and supporting among status equals or matched pupils.

School-based one-to-one support and School-based group support are two examples of peer to peer support models (Coleman et al, 2017). School-based one-to-one support is a student who helps others, with the supervision on an adult facilitator. Usually addresses issues such as self-esteem, confidence, emotional health and well-being at school. School-based group support models usually involve 'lessons' given to a group of classmates in some cases by older classmates (e.g. year 7 pupils supported by those in years 10-12), or sessions among a 'peer group' led by trained facilitators.

Some psychosocial approaches underpin peer support models, particularly:

- *Bandura's Social Learning Theory:* the assumption underpining this theory is that people learn through observing another's behaviour and attitudes (live model), as well as the outcomes of that behaviour. According to this approach, behaviour is modeled and can serve as a guide for action.

- *Festinger's Social Comparison Theory:* this theory posits that individuals self-evaluate based on the comparison of their own beliefs and desires against those of another (similar) person's. Upward comparisons with similar others (e.g., peer supporters) can improve ones' motivation and self-improvement and be a source of hope and inspiration. Peers can be more effective than adults at teaching age-appropriate play and leisure activities (Pierce & Schreibman, 1997, p.207).

- *Empowerment framework:* it aims to increase an individuals' knowledge, confidence and personal skills to activate personal or systemic/community change (e.g., Cattaneo & Chapman, 2010).

Overall, evidence shows that peer to peer programs at school (in-person peer support schemes) provide benefits to the children involved[1].

Benefits for children with SEN	Benefits for children without SEN
1. Friendships	1. Meaningful friendships
2. Increased social initiations, relationships and networks	2. Increased appreciation and acceptance of individual differences
3. Peer role models for academic, social and behavior skills	3. Increased understanding and acceptance of diversity
4. Increased achievement	4. Respect for all people
5. Greater access to general curriculum	5. Prepares all students for adult life in an inclusive society
6. Enhanced skill acquisition and generalization	6. Opportunities to master activities by practicing and teaching others
7. Increased inclusion in future environments	7. Greater academic outcomes
8. Greater opportunities for interactions	8. All students needs are better met, greater resources for everyone
9. Higher expectations	
10. Increased school staff collaboration	
11. Increased parental participation	
12. Families are more integrated in the community	

[1] Adpated from http://www.kidstogether.org/

Peer to peer support helps in the promotion of social bonds that lead to independence and an increase in self-esteem, self-efficacy and in school climate.

Benefits have been also found with teachers and in school environment: special education teachers reported that peer support programs allow them to use their time more effectively which is spent on planning, consulting, and co-teaching (Barnitt, 2005).

In school settings the main goals of peer to peer support are usually the promotion of group cohesion and supportive atmosphere in schools, while at the same time learning in school activities. Considering that Yard4all aims to promote more social contact between pupils with SEN and without impairments and to develop innovative learning processes, a peer to peer support scheme that can place children at the heart of the process through co-operative group work (Cowie & Wallace, 2000) provides a greater opportunity for pupils to work together on structured activities in class or outside class.

03
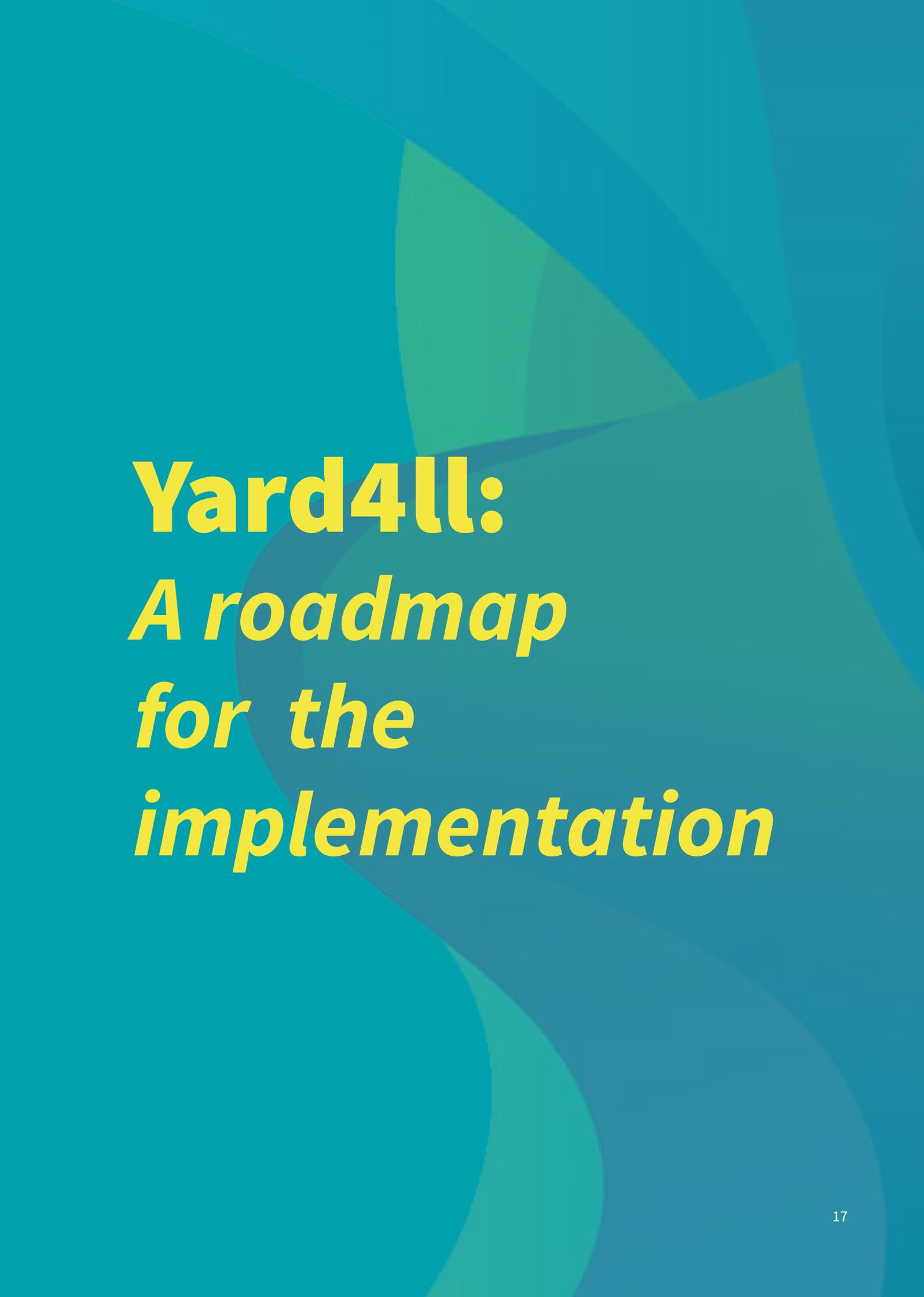
Yard4ll:
A roadmap for the implementation

YARD4ALL: A roadmap for the implementation

What are the objectives of this model?

The model aims to provide a roadmap of a peer to peer support scheme that helps to implement an alternative learning environment - school yards – and to create an innovative learning methodology that puts together children with SEN and without impairments.

What are the expected outcomes?

- Promoting (positive) social contact between pupils with SEN and pupils without impairments;
- Improve a more inclusive learning environment.

The peer to peer support model: Key actions

Overall, professional staff from the school must have the capacity to be responsible for program supervision, peer and peer supporter selection and training, monitoring of implementation, and evaluation (Community & Organizational readiness).

Community & Organizational readiness	*Program Development*
Sustainability	
Evaluation	*Program Implementation*

(Retrieved from Peers for progress[2])

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[2] http://peersforprogress.org/resource-guide/starting-a-peer-support-program/

1. Starting point

- Start stablishing who is going to be the coordinator, your team at school and the stakeholders.

- Identify needs and align program goals to meet those needs:

    - *How many pupils with SEN will be involved? And without SEN?*

    - *What will be the role of each person/entity along the intervention?*

    - *What are the facility's needs? (e.g., Accessibility for all children is ensured? Equipment needs are listed?)*

    - *Stablish a timetable for activities or a certain period of time.*

- Identify children who are going to be involved as peer supporters – define criteria.

- Define a training period before intervention for peer supporters, and for other key actors and stakeholders.

- Identify who is going to do the supervision of peer supporters and set a training before the implementation.

19

Steps for peer supporters' selection & training[3]:

Getting to know peer studentes work

Appoiting instrucions

Selection of peer students

Basic training for the peer students

Planning the activities

Further training for peer students

Carrying out the activities

Final stage/ Conclusion

Throught: Group process, communication, evaluation

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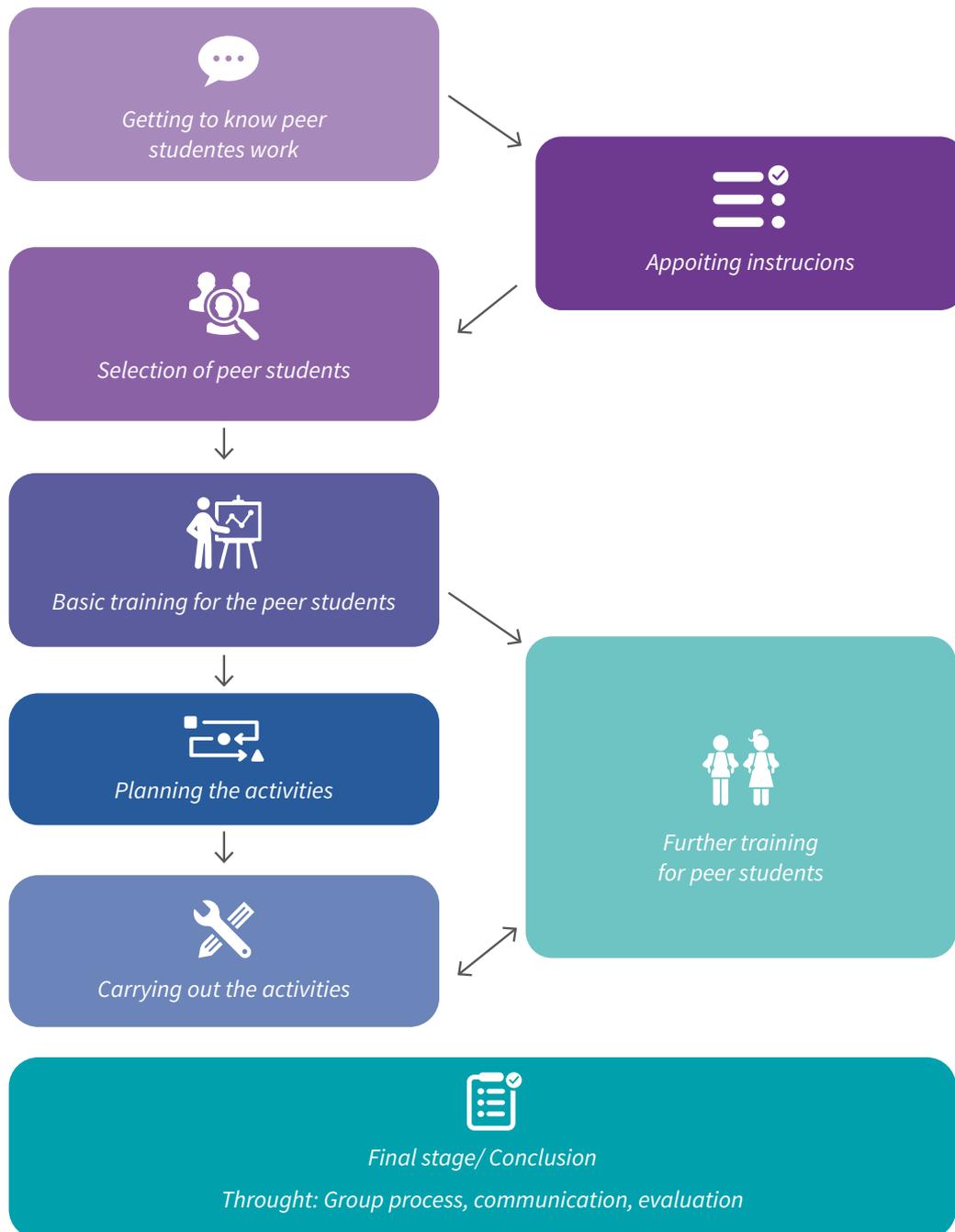
[3] Adapted from Klicksafe (https://www.klicksafe.de/fileadmin/media/documents/pdf/Ueber_Klicksafe/Youth_Panel/Setting_up_Peer_Support_Programmes_in_Schools.pdf)

Who are the key actors?

Peer supporters are one of the key actors. What are the qualities of a peer supporter?

Interpersonal skills: • good/active listener • approachable • trustworthy, friendly • kind • patient • role model • good leader • caring person • passionate about helping others

Success depends on the quality of the peer supporters; specifically, trained supporters who are enthusiastic, committed and who have strong communication and interpersonal skills are key elements in order to ensure a succeed implementation.

Define goals and action-oriented steps: the use of a S.M.A.R.T. scheme[3]:

SMART

Specific	Measurable	Achievable	Relevant	Time-bound
What do we want to accomplish? *(Who, What Where, When & Why)*	What do we want to measure and how? [use mix method approach – qualitative and quantitative instruments]	Goals; barriers/ challenges; steps to meet it	Relevant goals must be settled: for pupils and for families *(Engaging the whole school in planning is important)*	Define whether specific goals are achievable before the program is over or over the course of the whole program.

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[4] Adapted from: Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Retrieved from: http://hrweb.mit.edu/performance-development/goal-setting-developmentalplanning/smart-goals

2. Delivery/Program implementation

- School-based support groups should not exceed four members;

- The use of strategies from cooperative learning approaches are important:

  - *Children should be encouraged to express their opinions and offer solutions to problems they are discussing.*

  - *A state of positive goal independence is important: group members can understand that they are required to not only complete their part of the work but to ensure that others do likewise.*

- Group members need to understand that they are individually accountable for their contributions to the group, which can emerge when members accept responsibility for completing their part of the task while simultaneously encouraging others to do likewise.

3. Planning & monitoring

- Define goals and action-oriented steps.

- Implement the action plan and monitor the process:

  - *Intervention is being conducted as planned? What were the adaptations needed?*

  - *Assess whether specific goals were achieved after an activity, identify obstacles and reflect on possible solutions.*

- *Assess peer supporters, stakeholders and team members' involvement and responsiveness in a regulary way.*

- *Assess participants' satisfaction after each activity.*

- *Assess satisfaction with supervision periods.*

- *Establish two observation periods in order to monitor the quality of the intervention.*

- **Plan smaller training periods during intervention for peer supporters and other stuff members.**

- **Settle when peer supporters carry out their duties, settle specific goals and monitor the process.**

18 ACTIVITIES
Skills:

1. Basic interactions
2. Communication
3. Emotional skills
4. Cooperation
5. Problem solving
6. Conflict management/ resolution

OUTCOMES

Promote more social contact between pupils with SEN and without

Improve an inclusive learning environment
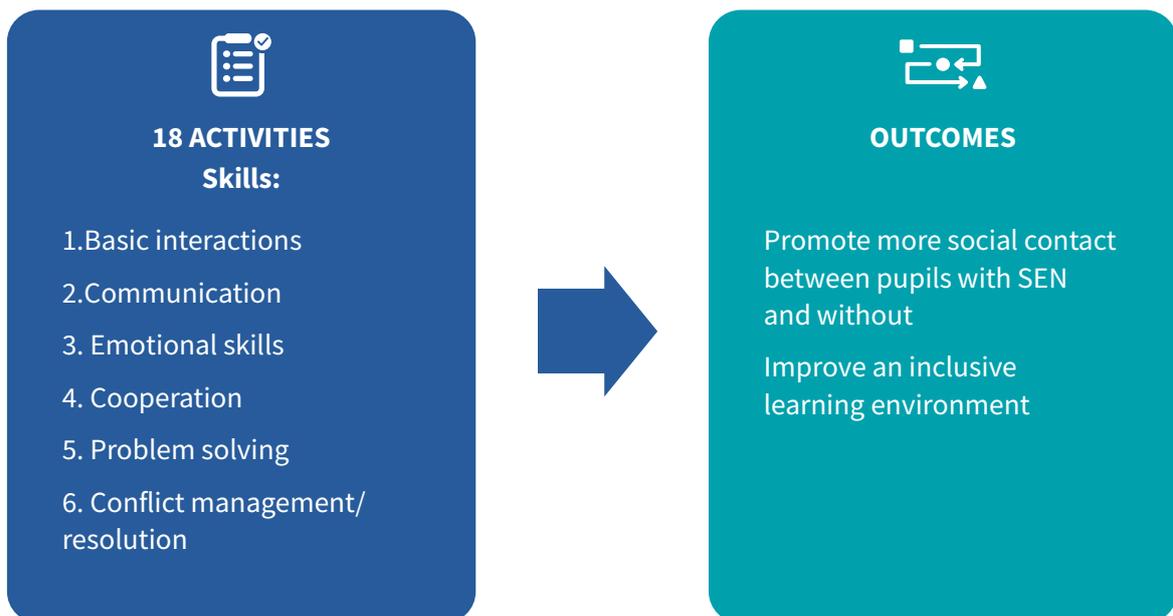
Skills and activities

Skills	Activities
1. Basic interactions	• Sit eyeball to eyeball • Use each other's name • Follow instructions • Share materials and tools • Pay attention to each other
2. Communication skills	**Verbal:** • Listen to each other, • Take turns • Develop language competences • Ask questions • Initiate conversation • Common understanding of terminology **Nonverbal:** • Express emotions • Recognize emotions (face, body language)
3. Emotional skills	• Identify own emotions • Express emotions appropriately • Identify emotions in others • Understand triggers • Have fun with other children • Know how to relax (self-regulation)
4. Cooperative skills	• Work in pairs/groups • Focus and support on common work and success • Share tasks and responsibilities • Gain experience how to help / to be helped • Offer your help / caring • Speak about pleasures and problems • Agree / disagree with an idea (not a person) • Give feedback / evaluate a situation
5. Problem solving skills	• Collect and organize information • Ask for help • Know how to analyse a situation (pros and cont) and to make decisions (individually, in pair or in group) • Accept consequences
6.Conflict management/ resolution	• Explore points of views • Negotiate • Compromise • Learn how to evaluate a situation

Social Competences

Name of the Activity	Basic Interactions	Communication Skills	Emotional Skills	Cooperative Skills	Problem Solving Skills	Conflict Management/ resolutions	Sciencitif Knowledge (biology, mathematic or art skills)
1. Step by step in pictures	●	●		●			
2. What is on my back?	●			●			●
3. Sailors	●		●	●	●		
4. Goblin Stickyfinger	●	●		●	●		
5. Scale of feelings – poisoning words	●	●	●			●	
6. My turn – beanbag technic	●	●					
7. What is under our roof?	●			●	●		
8. Collecting herbs (effects)	●			●	●		●
9. Collecting herbs to use as spices	●			●	●		●
10. Let's plant seeds together!	●			●	●		●
11. Gardening for Christmas gift	●			●	●		●
12. Make a "How to plant inside book?"	●		●	●	●		●
13. Uses, preparation of herbs and making herbal tea	●			●	●		●
14. Make a plan of seed starting time	●		●	●	●		●
15. Recognition of herbs	●				●		●
16. Tilling your garden	●		●	●	●		●
17. Using herbs as spices	●			●	●		●
18. Walk in the garden, introduction of herbs	●	●		●			●

How to deliver the activities?

- **The tools are intended to have a flexible implementation according to the need's assessment and the group of children involved.**

- **Activities were thought to be implemented for children between 6-12 years old.**

- **The tool includes indoor and outdoor activities**

- **The main goal is to apply the 18 activities in order to achieve the expected outcomes or identify specific competencies that need to be improved according to a previous need assessment.**

For an effective peer learning, the peer supporters should be provided with instructions and guidance beforehand on how to effectively teach quality material to others.

Overall, following peer to peer support assumptions, peer supporters must work together in each activity with at least one peer with disability/SEN.

In order to promote positive interactions, the literature shows that peer support learning is fundamental, but other variables are relevant too: long-term interactions; cooperative activities toward common goals; equal status; support for contact embedded in social norms.

At the end of each activity it is important to monitor peer supporters' guidance and peer's comprehension.

Name of the activity:	1. Step by step in pictures

Covered outcomes:	• *Positive Contact between children* • *Focus and support of common work*
Age:	> 6 years
Number of participants:	Pairs (2) or small groups (3-4 children/group) – 1 children with SEN in each group
Duration:	30 minutes (max)
Type of the activity:	Preparation and organization
Aims of the activity:	• To set the steps of a working process • To make easier to structure/organize processes for child with some SEN (e.g., ASD, ADHD, or mental disability, hearing disorder, language disorders)
Preparation:	• Explore points of views • Negotiate • Compromise • Learn how to evaluate a situation
Equipment:	• Pictures/ pieces of papers to draw, scissors with magnet or rip tape on backside • Small, moveable magnetic table / rip tape table
Details of the activity:	Children in pairs/small groups build the structure of the following work session: 1. Teacher define the work session (e.g. plant kohlrabi, pick apples in the garden) 2. Children draw the steps of the work sessions. 3. Children make the order, how the steps follow each other. 4. Pairs or groups make a small presentation about the process and the pictures. 5. Class can discuss about the order or give a positive feedback. 6. According the process children can get ready the process in the garden **Variants:** • *pairs or groups can plan different/parallel processes* • *pairs/groups show the pictures, other children have to define the steps* • *pairs/groups show the pictures and play the process as a pantomime* • *pairs/groups play the process as a pantomime and the other children have to define it.* • *children can match steps with names – who is responsible for it?* • *children can match steps with tools* • *as homework children can make pictures of household processes together with parents (e.g. how to make the dinner / cleaning basin)*
Processing & evaluation:	**Questions for children:** • *Hands up! – Was it helpful to make a visual guideline to the process?* • *Would you do it again?* • *What was the importance of working together with a peer/peers?* **Questions for teachers:** • *Could the children finish the process successful?* • *How many help they needed and when? It was helpful for the children?*

Name of the activity:	2. *What is on my back?*

Covered outcomes:	• *Positive contact between children* • *Focus on common success* • *Develop language competence / biological knowledge*
Age:	> 6 years
Number of participants:	Pairs (2) – 1 SEN child in each pair
Duration:	30-45 minutes (max)
Type of the activity:	
Aims of the activity:	• Reinforce knowledge acquired • Reinforce cooperation
Preparation:	Choosing and print related pictures of plants/choosing plants from the yard
Equipment:	Pictures of plants or whenever possible, real plants
Details of the activity:	Children are working in pairs. The teacher sticks the picture of a chosen plant on the back the one child. The other member of the pair has to describe the plant without to say the name of it. **Variants:** • *it can be played as a twenty question and with the starting "Am I a … /Have I …?/Need I …?* • *the speaker has + 1/2/3 taboo-words – these are not allowed to mention* • *It can be helpful to play a test: teachers can give some suggestion how to ask, how to think. Children can answer together to gain experiences.* If it is difficult to certain children, teachers can help: • *Teacher can ask: "what would you ask from yourself in his/her place?"* • *Teacher can whisper some ideas* • *Other pairs can help to give some suggestion to ask*
Processing & evaluation:	**Questions for children:** • *Could you ask good questions?* • *Did you receive useful answers?* • *What was difficult/easy to you? Asking or answering?* • *What was the importance of working together with a peer/peers?* **Questions for teachers:** • *How many children needed help?* • *If it was frustrating, what were the sources? (e.g., Theoretical knowledge or communication skills?)*

Name of the activity:	⛵ *3. Sailors*	YARD4ALL

🏁 **Covered outcomes:**	• *Improving emotional skills: sensitization for blind people or people with visual disability, and communication skills (listening, recognizing the feelings of others),* • *Gain experience how to help / to be helped and problem solving*
🎂 **Age:**	> 6 years
👪 **Number of participants:**	Pairs (2) – 1 SEN child in each pair
🕐 **Duration:**	30 minutes (max)
🔺 **Type of the activity:**	• Using practical knowledge • Developing social skills
🎯 **Aims of the activity:**	• Reinforce knowledge about plants in garden. • Trial of roles of supporter and a person who need support. • Sensitization for blind people / people with visual problems. • Children with SEN can gain experiences to be able to help to others.
📋 **Preparation:**	Make safe ways
🛠 **Equipment:**	1 cloth to cover the eyes / pair
Details of the activity:	Story: sailors travelled on a boat but after a big storm they were shipwrecked on the Invisible Island, where you cannot see anything. All of them are very hungry and must search for something to eat. On the Invisible Island they are living Lightbeings and they are so kind and friendly that they are ready to help the sailors. One member of the pairs is the Lightbeing, the other member is an outcast, who must wear a cloth to hide his/her eyes. Lightbeings have to navigate sailors to the garden and they have to find some plants appropriate for cooking/baking / eating raw / make a tee. Teacher talk with Lightbeings how to navigate another people: • *You can offer your arm, shoulder.* • *You have to say turns, staircase, barriers, etc.* • *On the staircase you have to go in front of your pirate/princess to protect them.* • *You have to give clear information: you have something in front of you / on your left hand / we have to go 10 steps right.* *After the successful harvest children change roles.*
📊 **Processing & evaluation:**	**Questions for children:** • *How did you feel yourself as a blind sailor? Did you feel safe yourself? Why?/ How could it be better for you?* • *How did you feel yourself as a supporter Lightbeing?* • *Which was more difficult for you? Why?* • *Your peer was important to you? How?* **Questions for teachers:** • *How children evaluate the activity? How many help they needed and when? The goals were achieved? What was the role of peer supporters?*

Name of the activity:	4. Goblin Stickyfinger

	Covered outcomes:	• *Improve cooperating activities: initiating conversation, sharing tasks and responsibilities, ask for help and offer your help;* • *improve problems solving skills: make decision and accept consequences focus on common success*
	Age:	> 6 years
	Number of participants:	Small groups (3-4 children/group) – 1 SEN child in each group
	Duration:	30 minutes (max)
	Type of the activity:	Developing social skills and problem-solving skills
	Aims of the activity:	• Find a problem-solving method • Cooperate for success
	Preparation:	• Define an exercise in the garden to do and the necessary tools. • Every group will get a toolkit with one or two missing tool(s)
	Equipment:	1 toolkit for gardening / group
	Details of the activity:	Story: last weekend Goblin Stickyfinger moved to the garden and stolen some apples/flowers/… and tools. Now our Goblin gone away but will be back in 20 minutes. We have to make our gardening in this time. The goal is that children recognize: • *missing tools* • *they cannot do the work on time AND* • *they can cooperate: help each other and/or change tools.* Groups can have the same task to do or can have different tasks. If it is necessary, teacher can motivate them to search a solution for the problem or can give some suggestion. **Variant:** Children are not allowed to speak because Goblin Stickyfinger can hear anything and will be back to steal some more things.
	Processing & evaluation:	**Questions for children:** • *Did you manage to finish your tasks?* • *Why was it successful?* • *What was the importance of working together with a peer/peers?* **Questions for teachers:** • *Was it easy to find a solution?* • *How can children finish working on time? Some of them did everything or could they do activities together helping each other? What was the role of peer supporters?*

Name of the activity:	5. Scale of feelings – poisoning words	YARD4ALL

Covered outcomes:	*Improve problem solving skills and conflict management: signing problems between children, prevention of conflicts, express emotions, recognizing emotions*
Age:	> 6 years
Number of participants:	Groups with 3-4 elements (1 SEN child in each group)
Duration:	30 minutes (max), during more than once /daily/weekly/monthly)
Type of the activity:	• Developing communication skills / conflict management skills / emotional skills
Aims of the activity:	• Give opportunity for children to give feedback in a good way • Support children with behavioral problems.
Preparation:	Choose appropriate tools
Equipment:	Scales and colorful papers/disks, numbers, smileys
Details of the activity:	Teacher talk with children about how to speak during common work. *What can we do if we are not agreed? How can we give feedback?* *How can I give a signed if we are not in agreement?* Teacher can make an agreement with children: • *If we are not agreed, we can use poisoning words. We want to avoid this.* • *It is hard to stop discussing if it is a conflict. Our goal is to avoid big conflicts and hurt each other.* • *Children can decide if they use colors / numbers / smileys to sign how they feel the reaction of each other in a discussion. e.g.: scale of colors: blue – green – yellow – orange – red; scale of numbers from 1 to 6* • *Children can demonstrate which level has which meaning. Blue is "okay/ you're nice"; orange is "you are rude"; red has the meaning "you are frightening / dangerous".* • *Groups can define poisoning words / behavior – these are not allowed.* • *Groups can collect examples what to use instead of this.* • *Children can give feedback each other during working together.* • *Teachers are there to help – you can ask for help* • *Everybody can to make mistakes, everybody can say sorry.* • *If you get a feedback orange or red, 5 or 6, or related smileys you must step back and make a break for 3-5 minutes. Peers can then help you to find a solution to get a blue sign.*
Processing & evaluation:	**Questions for children:** • *Is it easier to give feedback / receive feedback this way?* • *Were you able to stop anger if you get a feedback this way?* • *How peers helped in the process?* **Questions for teachers:** • *Does come in children's mind to use scales to give feedback in a conflict situation?* • *Could you prevent bigger conflicts? How many in a day/week/month?*

Name of the activity:	**6. My turn – beanbag technic**	

	Covered outcomes:	*Improve communication skills and basic interaction: pay attention to each other, respect each other, take turns*
	Age:	> 6 years
	Number of participants:	Small groups (3-4 members/group) – 1 SEN child in each group
	Duration:	30-45 minutes
	Type of the activity:	Developing communication skills
	Aims of the activity:	• Teach a method to be safe in big groups: to listen and to be listened. • Structure communication in groups. • Give support for children with behavioral and concentration problems.
	Preparation:	Choose a topic
	Equipment:	Beanbag
	Details of the activity:	If children have to speak about a topic in big groups, it can be difficult to listen to each other. In each group students have a beanbag – the one who holds can speak. Teacher can define how long / children can arrange and use a sandglass. The beanbag must circulate among all the students in each group. At the end each group can choose a topic and the exercise is done for the big (class) group. • *Children that wait for their turn must learn how to pay attention to each other (e.g., ask questions at the end).*
	Processing & evaluation:	**Questions for children:** • *Could you follow who's turn is it?* • *Could you wait for your turn?* • *Could you keep the rules?* • *How important was to do it with your peers in a smaller group first?* **Questions for teachers:** • *Were children able to keep the rule? How many times did you have to remind children to keep the rule?* • *Children helped each other? How?*

Name of the activity:	7. What is under our roof?		YARD4ALL
Covered outcomes:	• *Improve cooperative and problem-solving skills:* • *Speak about pleasures and problems* • *Teach a method to evaluate our situation*		
Age:	> 6 years		
Number of participants:	Small groups (3-4 students/group) – 1 SEN child in each group		
Duration:	30 to 60 min (max) – the exercise must be conducted more than once		
Type of the activity:	Developing social skills		
Aims of the activity:	Teach a method to speak about problems in an appropriate way		
Preparation:	Draw a big paper / table with a roof		
Equipment:	Flipchart / big paper, pencils and notes papers		
Details of the activity:	• After a work phase / at the end of the month / year / half year it is good to evaluate our common work. • *What is under our roof?* • Children get 2 papers in different colors: one is for pleasures, one for problems/challenges. • Every child can write many things on papers/do an audio. • Everybody can stick his/hers notes under the roof. On the one side come the pleasures on the other side the challenges or problems. • If children do not identify problems, teachers need to have an example to work with children. • Children can be asked if they have any idea how to solve problems. Peer supporter can show some tips (learned previously with the teacher). • Exercise can be repeated regularly. We can realize development / changes.		
Processing & evaluation:	**Questions for children:** • *Have we more pleasure or more challenges/problems?* • *It was important to talk about this in groups. With your peers? How did they help?* **Questions for teachers:** • *Did children formulate real challenges/problems what you realized in group too? Was anything surprising for you?* • *Did you see a development compared the evaluation before?*		

Name of the activity:	8. Collecting herbs	YARD4ALL

Covered outcomes:	*Knowledge application and development of cooperative skills, problem-solving skills (working in groups, sharing tasks and responsibilities and make decision, asking for help)*	
Age:	> 6 years	
Number of participants:	Small groups (3-4 children/group) – 1 SEN child in each group	
Duration:	30 minutes (max)	
Type of the activity:	Theoretical and practical	
Aims of the activity:	To collect herbs and learn its effects	
Preparation:	Group creation, task description, preparation of drying place	
Equipment:	Baskets, strings, pruning shears	

Details of the activity:	• *Before the task we revise the way of herbs collecting*
	• *Each group collects 5-6 kind of herbs helping each other*
	• *They sort them*
	• ***Exercises:***
	  • *to make bouquets*
	  • *tie them together*
	  • *hang up the bouquets to dry*

Processing & evaluation:	**Children & teachers:** • *Discussing the experiences* • *Drawing the experiences* • *Talk about helping each other*

Name of the activity:	9. **Collecting herbs to use as spices**

Covered outcomes:	• *Gaining knowledge, application and development of cooperative skills,* • *problem-solving skills (working in groups, sharing tasks and responsibilities and make decision, accept consequences, asking for help)*
Age:	> 6 years
Number of participants:	Small groups (3-4 children/group) – 1 SEN child in each group
Duration:	40 minutes
Type of the activity:	Theoretical and practical
Aims of the activity:	• Using herbs in the kitchen • Education for a healthy lifestyle and tradition
Preparation:	Forming groups, description of task, preparation of equipment
Equipment:	Baskets, pruning shears

Details of the activity:	• *Learn uses of herbs*
	• *Learn the benefits of herbs*
	• *Learn the several ways of uses*
	• *Watching informative film about herbs and its preparing*
	• *Helping each other in collecting herbs in the garden and tasting them*
	• ***Exercises:***
	  • *collecting herbs*
	  • *smelling*
	  • *learning folk songs (including herbs names)*

Processing & evaluation:	**Tasks for children:** • *Discussing the experiences* • *Drawing the experiences* • *Talk about helping each other*

Name of the activity:	10. Let's plant seeds together!	YARD4ALL

Covered outcomes:	*To develop students' fine motor skills, to increase students' scientific knowledge, to improve social skills by cultivating group work and communication, to share responsibilities, to support for joint decision-making, have fun together*
Age:	> 6 years
Number of participants:	Small groups 3-4 students/group (1 SEN child in each group)
Duration:	45 minutes
Type of the activity:	Indoor/outdoor activity
Aims of the activity:	To learn about pests, to protect our seedlings from pests, to teach students about the importance of sustainability, to recycle material that is around home, to learn about seeding and planting process
Preparation:	Collect tubes from toilet paper or paper towel rolls
Equipment:	Scissors, metal box or tray, toilet paper tubes/paper towel rolls, wooden sticks, soil, seeds, markers for labelling
Details of the activity:	Explanations of the activities should be simple and understandable for all. During the activities group members can help each other. 1. *Students prepare the collars together. They cut 5 cm tall pieces from the toilet paper tubes or paper towel rolls to get secure circles from them. One of the students can collect them into a metal box or tray. Students can label the collars/containers, the name of the pl ant and date of the seeding could be written on them.* 2. *Students make some 50 mm measuring tools together, that will show the proper depth for planting the seeds.* 3. *Students fill the small containers with soil together.* 4. *With the help of the measuring tools, students plant two seeds in each container to ensure that each container will have a seedling (in case some of the tomato seeds do not germinate).* 5. *Students place the seedling tray in a warm place where bright light is available.* 6. *Students can make a watering plan- the soil of the tomato seedlings should be kept moist. Students take turns in watering (the best way is to water the containers from below)* 7. *After planting the seedlings outside the collar will protect them against pests.*
Processing & evaluation:	**Questions for children:** • *Did you enjoy the activity? It was important to work in group? Why?* • *What did you learn about seeding process?* • *What did you learn about pests?* • *How can we make containers from recycling materials?* *[Strong and healthy seedlings –as the result of the careful work]*

Name of the activity:	11. Gardening for Christmas gift	YARD4ALL

Covered outcomes:	*To increase student's creativity, to develop students' fine motor skills, to increase students' scientific knowledge, to improve social skills by cultivating group work and communication, to share responsibilities, to support for joint decision-making, have fun together.*
Age:	> 6 years
Number of participants:	Small groups 3-4 students/group (1 SEN child in each group)
Duration:	Different activities have different duration: harvest 40 minutes / drying 2 weeks / making the gift 40 minutes
Type of the activity:	Outdoor/indoor activities
Aims of the activity:	To learn about lavender, to experience the process of drying plants, to encourage students to make a handmade gift, to show students the various uses of lavender, to increase student's creativity
Preparation:	Start to grow lavender plants a year before this activity in the school garden
Equipment:	Scissors, string, brown paper bag -for drying; Wrapping paper, markers for labels. Ingredients for lavender cookies https://www.tasteofhome.com/recipes/lavender-cookies/
Details of the activity:	Explanations of the activities should be simple and understandable for all. During the activities, peers help each other (e.g. to tie a knot, to wrap the gift) 1. *Students first harvest the lavenders as early as they can during the day. They must pick those flower spikes that haven't fully opened yet.* 2. *Then they remove the lower leaves and bundle four to six branches together, securing with string.* 3. *After that they must place them upside down in a brown paper bag, with stems protruding and tie closed.* 4. *Students should punch small holes along the top of the paper bag for air circulation.* 5. *Lavenders must be hung in a warm, dark, area for about two weeks, checking periodically until the herbs are dry. Students in the group can take turns checking, making a checking plan which can be followed for each group member (for the SEN member as well). They can hang the plan on the wall of the class.* 6. *When lavenders are dry, the students pick the flowers and collect them in a basket.* 7. *Based on the enclosed recipe the students bake lavender cookies in the school practice kitchen. They can make different forms from the pasta.* 8. *They wrap the cookies in wrapping paper and decorate it with dried lavender*
Processing & evaluation:	**Questions for children:** • *What did you learn about the drying process of the plants?* • *What other ideas do you have of gardening for Christmas? (dried herbs, dried vegetables, strawberry jam)* • *How else can you make other kinds of lavender gifts? (lavender sugar, lavender-scented pillows)* • *It was important to work in groups? Why? [Delicious, creative and sustainable gifts for Christmas/other special festivity day].*

37

Name of the activity:	12. Make a "How to plant inside book?"

Covered outcomes:	*To work together, to develop scientific knowledge, to increase art skills, to share responsibility, to learn how to organize information, to improve social skills by cultivating group work and communication, support for joint decision-making, have fun together*
Age:	> 6 years
Number of participants:	Small groups (3-4 members/group)
Duration:	45 minutes X 6 times (depends on the growing season of the plant)
Type of the activity:	Indoor activity
Aims of the activity:	To learn about the life stages of plants, to examine the basic needs of seeds and plants and the influence of environmental factors, to have a hands-on experience planting seeds, to make observations and predictions
Preparation:	Buy the seeds, the soil, collect paper cups,
Equipment:	Seeds, soil, twelve-pack containers, squirt bottles with water, garden journals, rulers, wooden sticks and markers for labelling, squirt bottles with water
Details of the activity:	**Steps**

1. *Students collect different kinds of warm season plants which need a head start inside. Then children vote to select 8 plants they want to grow.*
2. *Write the name of the plants on different paper. Place them upside down on a table. Divide the class into groups (4-5 kids). Each group should pick 2 plant names.*
3. *Create seed related to math problems: the tasks can be of different difficulty (addition, subtraction, multiplication SNI*), percentage calculation (typically developed peers**)*

*The class plant 8 types of seeds. They work in 5 groups. Each group puts the seeds in a 12-compartment container. Each group planted two kinds of seeds in half and half ratios. How many seeds are planted in total?

** The class plant a total of 8 seed types (tomato, pepper, eggplant, pumpkin, cucumber, melon, bean, corn) two in each student group. There are 5 groups and each group place the seeds in a 12-pack container in a ratio of half to half. If you put 3 seeds in each part of the container, what percentage of the seeds planted will have tomato seeds?

1. *Encourage the kids to create seed related math problems themselves.*

2. *The groups have to collect information about their plants and start to write a gardening journal.*

3. *They should estimate the depth to plant seeds and work together to plant, water and label their seeds.*

4. *In their journals students should record the process and, based on their observations they have to describe the most important events (germination, shoot appearance, growth, light requirement, water requirement, special characteristics). They can add their seed related math exercises as well.*

5. *Students also have to draw pictures about the seed, the sprouts, the seedling and the plant itself.*

6. *Journals can put together to form a "How to plant inside" book, which contains useful information about the process when a seed growing into a plant and seed related math tasks to develop math skills as well.*

Through this activity each member of the group will find the task that he/ she can perform with responsibility. Group members need to work together in several areas to achieve the result they wanted. This led to equity within the group.

📊 **Processing & evaluation:**

Questions for children:
- *Did you enjoy the activity?*
- *What did you observe and learn about the growing process of a plant?*
- *Is was important to work in groups? Why?*

[Strong and healthy seedlings –as the result of the careful work.]

Name of the activity:	13. Uses, preparation of herbs and making herbal tea	YARD4ALL

Covered outcomes:	*Gaining knowledge, application and development of cooperative skills, problem-solving skills*
Age:	> 6 years
Number of participants:	Pairs (1 child with SEN and 1 without)
Duration:	2x30 minutes
Type of the activity:	Theoretical and practical
Aims of the activity:	Making and tasting herbal tea Education for a healthy lifestyle
Preparation:	Group creation, description of task, preparation of equipment
Equipment:	Kettle, jug, herbs, cups

Details of the activity:	• *Learn the uses and making of herbal tea*
	• *Learn the benefits of herbs*
	• *Learn the several ways of uses*
	• *Watching informative film from herbs and its preparing*
	• *Helping each other in the making herbal tea*
	• ***Exercises:***
	  • *boil water*
	  • *soak herb*
	  • *tasting*

Processing & evaluation:	**Tasks for children:** • Discussing the experiences • Talk about helping each other • Drawing the experiences • Filling in a test

Name of the activity:	**14. Make a plan of seed starting time**	

Covered outcomes:	*To increase students' scientific knowledge, to increase mathematical skills, to develop students' skills of being able to collect and understand information, to learn how to organize and use information, to improve social skills by cultivating pair work and communication, support for joint decision-making, have fun together*
Age:	> 6 years
Number of participants:	Pairs (1 child with SEN and 1 without)
Duration:	60 minutes
Type of the activity:	Indoor activity, collecting information, interpretation.
Aims of the activity:	To know about the proper times for starting plants from seed; To learn about different types of plants (early autumn crops/summer crops); To be able to take into consideration maturity, length of growth season, variety, zone, and time of last expected frost.
Preparation:	Buy different types of seeds
Equipment:	Computer with internet, paper, pen/pencil, seed packets
Details of the activity:	**Steps:** • *Make a list of your seeds, and draw a chart (name, picture, direct sowing/ indoor sowing, date of sowing, depth of sowing, seed spacing, length of germination time, date of starting hardening the plant, date of transplantation, growing height, additional needs*)* • *Read the seed packet directions and group the seeds: early autumn crops/ summer crops* • *Count the seed starting time: seeds need to be started four to six weeks before the date of the last frost. Their starting times are calculated by taking the date of the last frost and subtracting the days until transplant. The Last Frost Date can be checked from the meteorological reports. The seed pocket provides information on how many weeks.* **Collect more information about the plants (daily sunlight, soil, soil moisture level, water, fertilizer)* *Do together a diary/portfolio*
Processing & evaluation:	**Questions for children:** • *Did you enjoy the activity?* • *What did you learn about the different plants?* • *What did you learn about interpreting the seed pocket directions?* • *Can you teach it for the other students at school?* *[Based on the completed plan, planting of different plants can be worked out]*

Name of the activity:	15. Recognition of herbs	YARD4ALL

Covered outcomes:	*Knowledge application and development of cooperative skills, problem-solving skills*
Age:	> 6 years
Number of participants:	Pairs (1 child with SEN and 1 without)
Duration:	30 minutes
Type of the activity:	Practical
Aims of the activity:	Recognize the known herbs
Preparation:	Group creation, description of task, collect herbs
Equipment:	Baskets, several herbs, blindfolds

Details of the activity:	**Steps:**
	• *Before the task we collect several herbs from the garden*
	• *Put them in separate baskets*
	• *Children work in pairs, examining herbs one by one while helping each other*
	• ***Exercises:***
	  • *inspection of the various kinds of herbs with closed eyes (blindfolds)*
	  • *then with open eyes*
	  • *they discuss their answers*

Processing & evaluation:	**Questions/tasks for children:** • *Discussing the experiences* • *Drawing the experiences* • *We check how many plants they know one by one and together* • *How important it was to work in pairs?*

Name of the activity:	**16. Tilling your garden**	YARD4ALL

Covered outcomes:	*Increase students' scientific knowledge, improve social skills by cultivating pair work and communication, support for joint decision-making, having fun together*
Age:	> 6 years
Number of participants:	Pairs (1 child with SEN and 1 without)
Duration:	30 minutes (depending on the size of the garden)
Type of the activity:	Outdoor activity
Aims of the activity:	• Preparing the soil for planting plants and sowing seeds • Learn about when and how to till the garden
Preparation:	Make an action plan with the steps of the activity which students can follow
Equipment:	Thermometer, spade, shovel, hoe, rake, wheelbarrow

Details of the activity:

Steps:

1. *Testing the soil*
   - *dry enough? (pick up a handful and squeeze it, if it falls apart   if it stays in a ball :)*
   - *measure the temperature if it is ≥15˚C :)*
2. *Clean the surface*
3. *Tilling or digging your soil (students can start from the different ending)*
4. *Loosening the soil with organic material (compost). Children can carry the compost with a wheelbarrow, on the way back one of them can sit in the empty wheelbarrow and the other can push her/him then they can swop.*
5. *Mixing the compost and the soil: one student puts the compost and the other digs it.*
6. *Smoothing the surface (students can start from the middle of the place and go toward the edge)*

Processing & evaluation:

Questions for children:
- *Did you enjoy the activity?*
- *What did you learn about soil?*
- *Can you teach it for the other students at school?*
- *How important it was to learn in pairs?*

Examine the soil:
- *Is it clear enough?*
- *Isn't it compacted?*
- *How can we improve soil which is compacted?*

Name of the activity:	17. Using herbs as spices	
🏁 **Covered outcomes:**	*Gaining knowledge, application and development of cooperative skills, problem-solving skills*	
Age:	> 6 years	
Number of participants:	3-4 children per group (1 child with SEN)	
🕐 **Duration:**	2x30 minutes	
Type of the activity:	Theoretical and practical	
🎯 **Aims of the activity:**	Using herbs in the kitchen Education for a healthy lifestyle	
Preparation:	Group creation, description of task, preparation of equipment	
🛠 **Equipment:**	Baskets, pruning shears	

Details of the activity:	• *Learn uses of herbs*
	• *Learn the benefits of herbs*
	• *Learn the several ways of uses*
	• *Watching informative film from herbs and its preparing*
	• *Helping each other in making salad*
	• ***Exercises:***
	  • *collecting vegetables and herbs (parsley, basil…)*
	  • *preparing salads*
	  • *tasting*	

📊 **Processing & evaluation:**	**Tasks for children:** • *Discussing the experiences* • *Talk about helping each other* • *Drawing the experiences*	

Name of the activity:	🚶	**18.** *Walk in the garden, introduction of herbs*	YARD4ALL

🏁 **Covered outcomes:**	*Relaxation and development of cooperation skills, problem-solving skills*
🎂 **Age:**	> 6 years
👪 **Number of participants:**	4 children per group
🕐 **Duration:**	30 minutes
🔺 **Type of the activity:**	Practical
🎯 **Aims of the activity:**	Getting to know the herbs
📋 **Preparation:**	Group creation, description of task
🛠 **Equipment:**	Outdoor shoes, basket

🏢 **Details of the activity:**	• The group goes out into the garden helping each other • Children look around the beds in the garden, looking for the bed of herbs • The group observes the various kinds of herbs • The children share their previous knowledge • The children learn how to inspect a herb • The child who is able to collects the useable parts of herbs and gives it to others • They look, touch, rub and smell the plants

📊 **Processing & evaluation:**	**Tasks for children:** • Discussing the experiences • Drawing the experiences • Drawing herbs that they saw

04

Theoretical background

Do you want to know more?
Theoretical background on

- *Facts and Figures on Disability*

- *"Impairment" and "Disability" are not interchangeable concepts*

- *What do we mean by "special educational needs"?*

- *Where do attitudes towards persons with disabilities come from? Specific features and correlates*

- *Intergroup contact: What impact on the prejudice towards persons with disabilities?*

Theoretical background

Facts and Figures on Disability

Persons with disabilities comprise one of the most expressive minority groups in the world. In fact, according to the most recent data estimates made available in The World Report on Disability, published in 2011, about 15% of the world population of all age groups lives with some form of disability, a proportion corresponding to over one billion people (World Health Organization & World Bank, 2011; p. 29). Moreover, this report also states that it is strikingly evident that these figures increased about five percentual points since the last monitorization undertaken by World Health Organization (WHO) in the 1970's, a time when the estimates indicated a proportion of 10% of the world population pertaining to this population group (WHO & WB, 2011).

Concerning Europe, it is estimated that around 80 million people have disabilities, which implies that over 15% of the continent's total population is part of this minority (European Commission, Communication No. 636 European Disability Strategy 2010-2020, 2010).

At this point, it is very important to state a very significant caveat regarding all these data. The instruments used to gather them reflect different stances in what concerns theoretical and methodological assumptions on the conceptualization and operationalization of central concepts in this domain such as "impairment", "disability" or "handicap". Hence, it is not possible to fully compare all disability data available from several sources worldwide. In this sense, more recent estimates on disability express the theoretical framework proposed by the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF), a major paradigm shift from the dominant (bio)medical model, to a bio-psychosocial perspective, which, by no-means is the only, nor the ultimately unanimously preferred, alternative to the latter.

Therefore, it is not difficult to anticipate several issues related to the conceptual definition of relevant terms in this field of study – including those already identified above - which assume paramount importance, as they present significant methodological implications and challenges, which are also relevant to the present project, and that will be briefly discussed below.

Given this project's objectives, scope, and target population, it is especially important to know the figure estimates on disabled children in Europe, more relevantly the ones in the 6 to 10 years old age group.

In what concerns that specific sub-population within the people with disabilities group, data concerning it suffers from the same conceptual and methodological limitations already stated, which leads to strikingly disparate estimates regarding the prevalence number of children with disabilities. In this sense, the World Report on Disability points to the worldwide existence of 93 million children (5,1%) between the ages of 0-14 years with a "moderate or severe disability", as published by the Global Burden of Disease (WHO, 2008; cited by WHO & WB, 2011), an inferior estimate comparing to the 150 million figure presented by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF, 2005; cit. by WHO & WB, 2011) - which, however, includes all children under the age of 18, a broader age group, while, on the other hand, there is no information referring the degree of severity of the disability associated.

On the other hand, various other broad international studies data also suggest the existence of several indicators of social inclusion/exclusion of disabled persons, which in turn point to lives market by experiences of prejudice, discrimination and social inequalities (e.g. CRPG & ISCTE, 2007b; Eurofund, 2013). Moreover, it has

also been shown that other markers of social differentiation as age, gender, ethnicity or social orientation may lead to additional hardships (e.g. CRPG & ISCTE, 2007b; European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2013). In fact, the Third European Quality of Life survey (EQLS; 2011), undertaken among the EU27 countries, has showed people with limiting health conditions or disabilities face significative disadvantages in what concerns autonomy, treatment with dignity and respect, social support and social inclusion. In addition, according to another research by Eurofound (2013), being a woman, a senior citizen, having a limiting health condition or being severely disabled, or unemployed, meant to have experienced a significant negative impact in self-reported general health, which also led to a rise in the likelihood of reporting material deprivation. Additionally, during the recent world economic crisis period, the standard of living conditions of persons with disabilities in Europe have significantly worsen, especially when compared to those of the population without disabilities; furthermore, the poverty rate substantially rose between 2008 and 2010 in several European countries, and more markedly affecting this specific fringe of the population (EQLS, 2011; Eurofound, 2013).

All these indicators suggest this group is particularly vulnerable to social exclusion, which in turn is frequently associated to material deprivation. Moreover, they also

generally point to the already recognized two-way causal relationship between poverty and disabilities (e.g. WHO & WB, 2011). In addition, data also suggests disabled people from all age groups are especially prone to inequality/inequity experiences when compared to their non-disabled peers. Moreover, such differences may be boosted by disablism (Emerson et al., 2009; cited by Emerson, Madden, Graham, Llewellyn, Hatton, & Robertson, 2011), defined as prejudice, stereotyping or "institutional discrimination" against people with disabilities (Council of Europe, n.d.). Hence, the available collection of data also points to an interaction between impairments and social contexts that detrimentally impact the lives of persons with disabilities.

In fact, such interaction's possible negative impact has been recognized in the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF; 2001), a document where World Health Organization acknowledged, for the first time, the role of environmental factors, such as attitudes, relationships, services and policies, in causing disability - and hence with potential to also significantly impact individuals' health and wellbeing (e.g. WHO & WB, 2011). This publication proposes a universal bio-psychosocial model of all human functionality, being disability conceptualized in a continuum, which mirrors research stemming from several academic domains and, to some extent, as well as the demands

presented by disabled persons civil rights movements (WHO & WB, 2011). However, societies have still not completely abandoned the medical model's perspective and assumptions, which remains very influential, while addressing the context and the range of social conditions and environmental factors that contribute to provision these people's effective needs according to their particular health conditions or impairments is still widely forgotten (Emerson et al., 2011).

Experiences of ableism are transversal to many contexts, including health and educational settings, whose professionals may also hold negative attitudes towards people with disabilities (Chubon, 1982), what might impose barriers to equality, and, ultimately, hinders people with disabilities from fully participating in society.

Furthermore, as Emerson et al (2011) state, disablism also indirectly fuels the increased risk of exposure to socio-economic disadvantage of this minority group, thus accounting for 20 to 50% of the risk of worse mental and physical health among children with intellectual disabilities (Emerson et al, 2011). In addition, disablism entails even higher barriers and impediments to a full participation in mainstream society for those with severe disabilities, in situations of major dependence or with complex needs, who face very significant limitations in their abilities to communicate, to interact or to participate in conventional day to day life and prevailing

contexts, for what are frequently seen as a burden (Freyhoff, et al., n. d.), a perspective coherent with the medical model of disability which entails very orthodox normalcy standards. In addition, the literature has also shown that attitudes towards different disability groups may vary (Chubon, 1982), with more negative attitudes directed to the more severely disabled individuals (e.g. totally blind or deaf), or to those whose appearance or behaviour more deviates from "normal standards" (Block & Yuker, 1982).

As a conclusion, one may state that professionals working with individuals with disabilities are information and services gatekeepers, for it is possible that their negative attitudes may lead to restrictions in service options and alternatives, which in turn might hinder educational or rehabilitation services' quality and outcomes (Paris, 1993; cited by Chan et al., 2009).

We shall briefly discuss the reasons behind this matter of affairs, but before, it is important to define central concepts in this scientific domain, while also clarifying their differences, given their relevance to this project operationalization.

A much necessary remark: "Impairment" and "Disability" are not interchangeable concepts

As it became apparent above, several central concepts in this domain such as "handicap", "impairment", or "disability" faced changes throughout time and inevitably reflect the socio-historical, cultural contexts and their most prevalent values and reference frameworks.

Traditionally, their conceptualizations focused the 19th century forged medical model, whose assumptions impose "patterns of normality". As such "disability" is seen as a personal tragedy and an individual failing associated with "defective", or "impaired" minds and bodies (Barnes & Mercer, 2011a). It is not surprising then, it privileges interventions which are exclusively individually centred, and based in the recognition of his or her special needs and inaptness, what in turn deems justifiable the creation of specialized and specific services, while also favouring institutionalization mechanisms, under the power and authority of credentialed professionals (e.g. CRPG & ISCTE, 2007b, 2007c). Hence, the stigmatization, prejudice and exclusion of persons with disabilities is promoted as their integration in the mainstream services and social structures is regarded as impossible (CRPG & ISCTE, 2007b), thus disregarding any individual, social, attitudinal and contextual barriers (e.g. CRPG & ISCTE, 2007b, 2007c; Barnes & Mercer, 2011a, 2011b).

The civil rights' movements of the 60's and 70's of the last century, in the United Kingdom and the United States of America, promoted people with disabilities' self-advocacy movements against the medical model's disability orthodoxy, which in turn, much contributed to the emergence of the social model of disability. This framework adopts a diametrically opposite stance to the prevailing model, as it focuses on the relationship between the individual's body features, including impairments of any type, and the conditions of the social context he/she lives in. Alternatively, then, the social model states that the society imposes an experience of disability to those who have an impairment, whether temporary or permanent, because it fails to encompass human diversity. This perspective imposes a radical shift: from the focus in the individual "incapacity" as the source of dependency and marginalization, to the fundamental role social, economic, cultural and politic "disabling barriers" in hindering this minority group from effectively participating in society, and in denying their citizenship rights (CRPG & ISCTE, 2007b; Finkelstein, 1980; DeJong, 1981; cited by Barnes & Mercer, 2011b). Furthermore, its theoretical assumptions also allow to surpass the erroneous association between "impairment" and "disability", as established by the medical model, stating the possibility that a person with an impairment may not experience disability, depending on the societal level of adjustment to include functional diversity (CRPG & ISCTE, 2007b,c).

In sum, the social model thus conceives disability as a social construction problem and not a personal attribute (e.g. Barnes & Mercer, 2011a, 2011b, WHO, 2001).

The biopsychosocial model of disability has more recently been presented as a reconciliation framework between these diametrically opposed frameworks, being adopted by the World Health Organization (WHO), a stance that became clear through the publication of the ICF in 2001. Within this framework, "disability" (as well as "functioning") results from the interactions between health conditions (diseases, disorders, injuries) and contextual factors, including external environmental factors (e.g. social attitudes, architectural characteristics, legal and social structures and climate), and internal personal factors (e.g. gender, age, coping styles, social background, education, overall behaviour pattern, character, among others influencing the experience of disability by the individual; WHO & DGS, 2004).

Hence, the biopsychosocial model views "disability" as a decrement in each functioning domain; it is an umbrella concept that includes impairments, limitations in activity and restrictions in participation, thus indicating the negative aspects of the interaction between an individual (with a health condition), and his or her contextual factors (environmental and personal). Furthermore, "disability" can occur to anyone throughout the life cycle and be

either permanent or temporary (WHO & DGS, 2004; CRPG & ISCTE, 2007b). Although aiming at being a reconciling stance between the two others, it is not, however exempt from criticism, mainly due to the use of negatively connoted vocabulary (e.g. limitations in activity), which is contended to still significantly reflecting the medical model.

Naturally, and in addition to the cultural, social and political idiosyncrasies of a given time and place, all of these frameworks also left marks in several academic domains research, what not surprisingly is also reflected in the instruments forged under each of them with the objective of measuring the incidence and prevalence of impairments, handicaps and disabilities, while also leading to difficulties in results interpretation, while comparability is frequently impossible.

What do we mean by "special educational needs"?

Overall, special education needs can also be related with gifted children. Gifted children are described as children who have the potential to develop significantly beyond what is expected of their age. Schools have the challenge to provide more stimulating lessons and other opportunities for gifted children. Some examples are: giving the child more challenging work in class; matching their personalities and learning styles with teachers matching them with older or younger pupils with similar interests or abilities to enhance the learning of both; developing independent negotiated programs of studying led by a pupil's interest and skills

Where do attitudes towards persons with disabilities come from? Specific features and correlates

Eagly and Chaiken's (2003) umbrella definition of "attitude" is particularly relevant in the literature and is still quite influential (Lima & Correia, 2013). According to those authors, given that an attitude is not directly observable, it constitutes a hypothetical construct. In this sense, it can then be considered a latent variable, an inference, in what concerns the psychological processes that might explain the relationship between a given situation and subsequent observed behaviours. More simply put, Eagly and Chaiken define "attitude" as "a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour" (1993; cit. by Eagly & Chaiken, 2007; Lima & Correia, 2013).

Moreover, those authors contend that an attitude comprises three fundamental features that together predispose an individual to evaluate an attitude object in a certain way, and that will be briefly presented below.

Evaluation concerns all possible types of evaluative responding, including overt or covert responses, cognitive (beliefs and thoughts), affective (emotions and feelings) or behavioural (intentions and overt behaviour). These evaluative judgements have a direction or valence (favourable / unfavourable), as well as an intensity (weak / strong), as well as a certain degree of accessibility, which refers to the higher or lower probability of being activated automatically when the individual meets a determined attitudinal object. This last feature is related to the attitude's strength, the way it was learned and to the frequency with which it is elicited (Eagly & Chaiken, 2007; Lima & Correia, 2013). Moreover, evaluative responses can be either consciously or unconsciously experienced by the individual (e.g. Eagly & Chaiken, 2007).

Those evaluations refer to **specific entities** or **attitude objects**, which may be present or can be remembered upon presentation of an object's evidence or proxy (e.g. Fazio, 1995; cited by Lima & Correia, 2013). These attitude objects can also present specific features they can be abstract (e.g. an ideology), concrete (e.g. bugs), refer to a particular individual (e.g. Barack Obama), or be collective (e.g. Syrian immigrants).

Lastly, being a relatively stable psychological tendency throughout time, attitudes **reflect an interior state based in the individual's past experience** with determined attitude objects that in turn lead to a tendency to respond more or less positively or negatively to it (Eagly & Chaiken, 2007; Lima & Correia, 2013).

There are three other very close constructs which are very close to that of "attitude": prejudice, stereotype and discrimination. The first, prejudice has been frequently defined as a negative attitude; however, more recent perspectives define prejudice as "an attitude or orientation towards a group (or its members) that devalues it directly or indirectly, often to the benefit of the self or own group", and independently of its valence (Spears & Tausch, 2015, p.442); moreover, Nelson (2006), also states that it is also possible to hold positive prejudice towards the ingroups one belongs to.

In what concerns **stereotypes**, these are conceptualized as a cognitive structure comprising knowledge, beliefs and expectancies regarding a determined social group (Pendry, 2015), or individual members of that group, particularly those contents that promote the differentiation between groups (Stangor, 2008).

Finally, **discrimination**, can be defined as the negative action an individual exhibit based on prejudiced evaluative judgements (e.g. Allport, 1954; cited by Chan, Livneh, Pruett, Wang & Zheng, 2009).

Where do attitudes towards people with disabilities come from?

Regardless of the attitudinal object, the mechanisms underlying attitude and prejudice formation and change are the same. However, there are some idiosyncrasies particular to the prejudice towards people with disabilities (PwD).

One of the most influential reviews on these issues was conducted by Livneh (1988, 2012), and aimed at revealing the main roots and correlates of negative attitudes or prejudices towards PwD. However, the source's categories proposed overlap frequently, thereby evidencing their complex nature. Thus, additionally to the general mechanisms of attitude formation, negative attitudes and prejudice towards people with disabilities roots and correlates include (Dunn, 2015; Chan et al., 2009; Livneh, 1988, 2012) several aspects we shall briefly present below.

Social and cultural conditioning processes contribute to the emergence of negative attitudes and to stigmatization because of any significant deviation from dominant and pervasive social and cultural norms, standards and expectations regarding features such as physical attributes, personal productiveness and achievement, socioeconomic and health status.

Childhood and current situation influences point to causes which probably are rooted both on early childhood experiences - including parenting practices that influence the child's

beliefs and value systems construction in what concerns health, illness and what is considered normal - and on those related to current situational and interactional experiences with PwD: fear that association with these individuals may be interpreted as mirroring one's own psychological problems or of being contaminated while interacting with a disabled person.

Anxiety-provoking unstructured social situations with people with disabilities are often ambiguous and unfamiliar in what concerns the nature and implications of disability, and are thereby anxiety provoking, mostly when social rules and protocols for adequate interaction are not (well) established, as it is quite frequent. Lack of contact and exposure to people with disabilities is hence a very important factor on the origins of negative attitudes and prejudice towards people with disabilities. Given the importance of contact with PwD in the formation of attitudes towards this group, it will be more specifically developed below.

Prejudice-eliciting behaviours. Some behaviours that PwD may overtly express such as hostility, dependence, insecurity or assistance need, may facilitate the maintenance and strengthen prejudicial beliefs and feelings towards them, even if they are not accountable for those actions. Moreover, the media might also promote PwD's devaluation by portraying them negatively.

Disability-related factors. Attitudes' negativity also depends on factors such as 1) perceived severity - subjectively less severe disabilities perceived more positively; 2) visibility and cosmetic involvement - highly visible disabilities or greater cosmetic involvement are more negatively rated; 3) contagiousness – the more contagious a disability is recognized to be, the more negative the triggered reactions from nondisabled people; and, 4) predictability – temporary/curable disabilities are more positively evaluated than permanent.

Shared responses to minority groups. As with other minority groups, people with disabilities are often marginalized because of particular features, especially disability visibility (e.g. an evident physical difference) or visible recognition of its presence (e.g. distinct body movement, white cane), which elicit negative stereotypes, prejudice and discriminatory behaviour from members of majority groups. These are regularly encouraging isolation and segregation of persons with disabilities from the rest of the population. (e.g. Safilios-Rothschild, 1970; cited by Livneh, 2012).

Aesthetic (-sexual) aversion, is frequently prompted by visible disabilities, while triggering feelings of repulsion and discomfort when individuals without disabilities. Negative attitudes thus emerge from reactions including aesthetic aversion, anxiety invoked by threats to one's body

image or integrity and guilt, and from more cognitive determinants, such as worries, concerns and misconceptions regarding the nature of disability and impairments.

Fear of death thoughts. The loss of a body part or of any physical function may trigger anxiety when one meets a disabled person because those circumstances are symbolically linked to one's Ego and death and might, thus acting as reminders of own mortality, hence leading to negative affect, avoidance and withdrawal from further contact with people with disabilities.

Hierarchical attitudes towards disability. Literature has long been pointing to the existence of a hierarchy of disability acceptability among nondisabled people (e.g. Chubon, 1982; Chan et al., 2009), including professionals working with this minority group, such as teachers, counsellors and hospital staff (Chubon, 1982). This hierarchy has also been supported by more recent research (e.g. Chan et al., 2002). In this sense, it has been consistently observed that physical disability is more positively perceived than mental disabilities, and intellectual disability to be more favourably judged than psychiatric disabilities (e.g. Chan et al., 2002; Chan et al., 2009). In sum, it has been generally shown we can consider the existence of a continuum between a physical disabilities' pole and a cognitive and mental-health related disabilities' pole, where attitudes become progressively more negative the closer to the latter (Chan et al., 2009; Dunn, 2015).

Moral beliefs regarding disability. The sin-punishment-disability triad psychodynamic mechanism has also been extensively reported (Chan et al., 2009). Many individuals' see disability as a punishment for sins or other evil behaviours perpetrated by the person with a disability or by someone in his or her family, which in turn leads to beliefs of dangerousness, triggering fear, and ultimately to the rejection of PwD (Chan et al., 2009; Dunn, 2015).

Personality variables. Personality correlates such as high levels of authoritarianism, ethnocentrism, rigidity, narcissism, anxiety and aggressiveness, as well as low self-esteem, ambiguity intolerance or lack of body satisfaction have been found to be associated with more negative attitudes towards PwD, and may, therefore, foster their development.

Demographic variables. Variables such as people without disabilities', older, with less educational levels and socioeconomic status have previously been found to be especially relevant determinants of negative attitudes towards PwD (e.g. Livneh, 2012). Nevertheless, inconsistencies have been observed, with some reviews and recent research pointing in the opposite direction (e.g. Chubon, 1982; Yuker & Block, 1986; Pruett & Chan (2006).

Intergroup contact: What impact on the prejudice towards persons with disabilities?

Following several international legislations, for instance The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), and, more recently, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD; 2006), ratifying countries legislation and policies have been changing over time to ensure that any such rights are accounted for.

However, in what more specifically refers to the rights of persons with disabilities, effectively implementing the policies created under that legislation is not an easy task, mainly because prejudices and discrimination are not easily tamed, as several statistical data indicators have shown over time. People with disabilities lives are significantly marked by experiences of social exclusion that detrimentally impact their wellbeing and, ultimately, quality of life.

Even if it is true that many EU countries, and others throughout the world, developed legislation and policies attuned with international standards regarding social inclusion, truth is this ambitious and much necessary goal is still not completely attained.

This matter of affairs is easily observed in several societal sectors, including those contexts where children are inserted in a day to day basis, mainly educational settings. In fact, it is not enough that children with disabilities share the space with children without disabilities for prejudice and discrimination to cease. What literature shows is that is this minority group - as well as other minority groups - are especially vulnerable to bullying and to other social exclusion experiences, which have a significant negative impact in these children's physical and psychological health and academic performance, thus also impairing future prospects of inclusion as they get older.

In this sense, effective child inclusion goes well beyond sharing the same mainstream educational space, something that today is very well established scientifically, as data gathered throughout the last 50 years have revealed to be quite robust. In this sense, Gordon Allport's seminal work is inescapable in what concerns the understanding of intergroup relationships within which prejudice and discrimination arise, as well as to the development of intervention strategies to surpass them and its detrimental effects(ref.). According to a social psychological perspective, the mere exposure to a typically excluded outgroup, as is the case of people with disabilities, is not enough to stop prejudice and discrimination against them. Gordon Allport 1950 framework regarding attitudes and prejudice proposes optimal conditions under which the probability of positive contact between ingroups and outgroups would allow for a reduction in prejudice, and thus, also to less discrimination, and to an effective social inclusion (see Oskamp, 2008): long-

term contact; cooperative activities toward common goals; equal status; support for contact embedded in social norms.

In a very recent Educational Psychologist special issue on social inclusion, several authors review the most relevant literature concerning the barriers members of minority groups face concerning social inclusion, including children with disabilities.

The social and educational lives of students are very intimately connected; hence it is not surprising that those who are socially excluded by peers are negatively impacted (also) on their academic achievement (Juvonen, Lessard, Rastogi, Schacter, & Smith, 2019).

Also according to these authors, peer acceptance and having friends are two fundamental conditions for one to thrive fully as an individual, and also to achieve a better school performance, even though being socially included is not a guarantee of academic excellence; nevertheless, the counterpart situation, namely being a target of social exclusion, is very detrimental to their academic engagement and performance. Hence, for these authors, the search for the reasons underlying marginalization must shift from those marginalized to the specific setting conditions where they live in present, more precisely, how the student body composition (the "who") and organizational instructional practises (the "how") contribute to the minority lack of inclusion. These authors perspective puts both teachers and school administration in particularly critical positions in what concerns facilitating social inclusion. Some activities conducted with children need to be focus on positive interactions.

Reading suggestions

Find more:

http://peersforprogress.org/resource-guide/models-of-peer-support/

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/603107/Children_and_young_people_s_mental_health_peer_support.pdf

https://www.eluceoeducation.org/sen-gifted-children

https://www.gov.scot/publications/works-reduce-prejudice-discrimination-review-evidence/pages/5/

Read more:

Oskamp, S. (Org) (2008). **Reducing prejudice and discrimination**. Sussex: Psychology Press.

05

Annexes: *Tools to implement a peer to peer support model*

Annex 1: Checklist

🏁 **Starting point**	**Check?**	**When?**
Who is going to be the coordinator, your team at school and stakeholders?		
Roles are clear? (e.g., coordination; implementation; supervision of peer supporters; other)		
Peer supporters: criteria defined/selected		
How many pupils will be involved with SEN and without?		
Facility's needs and equipment		
Stablish timetable for activities/period of time.		
Define training periods before intervention, during intervention and for different actors		
Evaluation: M&A procedures		
Obstacles/challenges previously identified		

Annex 2: Define and monitor: Fill in your S.M.A.R.T. model

S.M.A.R.T.

SPECIFIC

What you want to accomplish?

Who

What

Where

When

Why

MEASURABLE

What do we want to measure?

How you want to measure?

ACHIEVABLE

Goals

Barriers/challenges

Steps to meet it along the implementation

REVELANT
Goals

TIME-BOUND

Which goals are achievable before the program is over ?

Which goals are achievable over the course of the whole program?

If you want to read more about peer to peer support models, have a look at these links:

http://peersforprogress.org/

https://www.klicksafe.de

https://www.amaze.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Final-Amaze-peer-support-literature-review-April-2018.pdf

Scientific papers:

Boud, D., Cohen, R., & Sampson, J. (1999). **Peer Learning and Assessment**. Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education, 24(4), 413-426.

Boud, D. (2001). Making the move to peer learning. In Boud, D., Cohen, R. & Sampson, J. (Eds.) (2001). **Peer Learning in Higher Education**: Learning from and with each other, London: Kogan Page (now Routledge), 1-20.

Bulte, C., Betts, A., Garner, K. & During, S. 2007. **Student teaching**: views of student near-peer teachers and learners. Medical Teacher. 29(6), 583-590.

YARD4ALL