

WORKSHOPS FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

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Abstract:

Parents encounter hurdles and obstacles on daily basis when it comes to raising children, since the latter keep testing the limits of their parents as well as themselves. Parents of children with special needs are often stigmatised in our society. The majority of parents with children without any special needs often avoid them, because they simply don't know what to say and how to help. Out of the desire to help the parents of children with special needs and develop relationships we created a module Working with parents at School for the deaf Ljubljana, within the project of Social inclusion.

The workshop goals were: Parents speak out about their problems. The relationship between the parents and the school improve. The parents accept the individual needs of their child and deal with them in an appropriate manner. We create a safe environment for parents' dilemmas, questions, frustrations.

The workshops were led by teachers and school counselors. First we got to know each other and ourselves through various social and interactive games. We met once a month. Each workshop lasted for two hours. The workshops centered around conversations, social activities, work in pairs, in which we included parents of nine pupils of different ages. We got to know each other, tested our memory, played games where we learned about ourselves and ways of accepting others, introduced ourselves, how we experienced the world, our differences and discovered our similarities. We realised that we were more alike than it seemed at the first glance. We spoke about our feelings, about the despair we felt at the child's stubbornness. We referenced the book Challenges of modern raising by Eva Horvat Kuhar.

Keywords: working with parents, social inclusivity, children with special needs