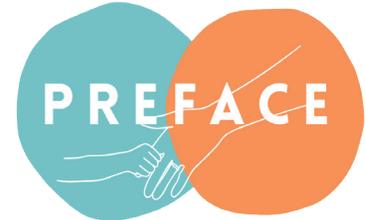


A NONVIOLENT EDUCATION FOR EVERY CHILD

Workshops to raise awareness about
so-called ordinary educational violence

A PRACTICAL GUIDE

for all professionals facilitating meetings
with parents



**DROITS DE
L'ENFANT**
Le Délégué général



Co-funded by
the European Union

FOREWORD

This document was drafted by Anna Rodriguez (Defence for Children International - Belgium) in collaboration with Nathalie Velu (La Ligue des familles), who also helped us to develop and organise workshops for groups of parents. We would also like to thank Delphine Hubert for her feedback on how to make the workshops more inclusive, and for her introduction to our workshops on the crucial theme of maintaining a professional attitude during training.

We sincerely thank the various groups of parents¹ who participated in our workshops for their willingness and openness in sharing their experiences, and their honesty.

Thank you to our partners on the project, David Lallemand (General Delegate for Children's Rights), François Moors (Observatoire de l'Enfance, de la Jeunesse et de l'Aide à la Jeunesse), Susanna Tuccio (Defence for Children International - World Service), and to the members of the PREFACE's advisory committee for their invaluable advice.

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¹ Two groups of parents met in Brussels and two groups of parents met in La Louvière

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INTRODUCTION

This guide is designed to support professionals who work with parents and wish to deal with so-called ordinary educational violence (SOEV).

This document has been developed as part of the PREFACE (Positive and Responsive Education for All ChildrEn) project, designed to help combat the phenomenon of **So-called Ordinary Educational Violence (SOEV)**² against children in Belgium. This two-year project (2022-2024) is coordinated by Defence for Children International (DCI) - Belgium, in partnership with the General Delegate for Children's Rights³, DCI World Service Foundation⁴ and the Observatoire de l'Enfance, de la Jeunesse et de l'Aide à la Jeunesse⁵. This document has been drafted for the Belgian context, where corporal punishment is not yet prohibited by law (as opposed to 23 EU Member States).

Raising awareness

In practical terms, the aim of this document is to provide professionals with the tools they need to raise awareness among parents about the issue of violence and, more specifically, SOEV. The first step before proposing non-violent parenting tools is to make people aware of the existence of SOEV, and to create **caring and non-judgemental discussion forums**.



Practical tools for everyone

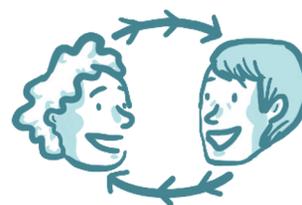


In this tool, we offer a clear definition of SOEV, a classification of violence, and its possible consequences on a child's well-being and development. We also propose a methodology to conduct two awareness-raising workshops for groups of parents.

In order to produce this guide, we met with four groups of parents and invited them to take part in interactive workshops. Dealing with this topic with this target audience can be difficult. The speaker's professional attitude must be one of listening and support. This guide is accompanied by a booklet for parents taking part in the awareness-raising workshops. In this booklet, parents will find a discussion of the topic, examples of non-violent parenting practices, resources for further reflection, and places where they can go for support according to their needs.

Meeting places for parents

This awareness-raising tool is not intended to point the finger at parents. Rather, it is a way of supporting parenthood, raising awareness and questioning practices that are often learned in our environment and made commonplace by society. It is essential to offer parents places to meet and talk about the challenges of parenthood. The activities proposed hereafter enable parents to become aware of and make the most of the resources available, to realise that others face similar challenges, and that concrete, practical and rapid solutions exist.



² In English-speaking countries and literature, and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, it is common to talk of "corporal punishment and psychological or emotional abuse". DCI Belgium and its partners use the term 'So-Called Ordinary Educational Violence' in recognition of the fact that the forms of violence children may experience (in educational, recreational settings or at home) are diverse and include non-physical forms of violence. We use "so-called" because the use of "ordinary" alone would contribute to trivialising these specific forms of violence. The same applies to "educational", which would legitimise it. Using "so-called" sheds light on the fact that education and daily use of violence are, in essence, contradictory and not compatible with children's rights.

³ Accueil Dgde - Délégué général aux droits de l'enfant - Communauté française Wallonie Bruxelles (cfwb.be)

⁴ World Service Foundation - Defence for Children

⁵ Accueil - OEJAJ - Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles - OEJAJ - Observatoire de l'Enfance, de la Jeunesse et de l'Aide à la Jeunesse (cfwb.be)

CONTENT



Target group of professionals

- Parenting coaches, psychologists, parenting facilitators, all professionals who organise or want to organise group sessions with parents.
- Shared facilitation is recommended
- Advised co-hosting



Target audience and duration

- All parents
- Duration of a session: 3 hours
- Number of sessions: 2
- Can be adapted in line with needs



Objectives

- Supporting families through free workshops for parents to raise awareness about the child's right to freedom from all forms of violence and the violence children face in their daily lives.
- Providing information on the consequences of SOEV.
- Providing practical support for parents in order to adopt a non-violent approach to education (positive parenting).



Equipment

All supplies listed here can be downloaded on the DCI – Belgium website⁶

- Photolangage path
- Factors (A3 version and sticker version)
- Balance of resources and stressors
- Set of VEO⁷ educational cards (Mpedia) to be printed on A4 (laminated)
- Blank sheets
- Pencils, markers, glue, scissors
- Emoticons representing the 4 emotions
- Board or posters
- Post-it notes in different colours (4)
- A booklet to distribute to parents attending the workshops



Preparation

- We advise you to read this guide in its entirety and read more extensively on the subject, if necessary.
- Create a visual, an invitation to the event. Choose a simple visual that sums up the objective of the meetings in one sentence.
- If you are running the workshops with parents you don't know/who don't know each other, plan sufficient time to foster a framework of trust and care (for example, by using icebreaker games).
- It is advisable to organise workshops with a group of parents with a similar level of awareness of the subject. You should also pay attention to the accessibility of writing and reading materials. Feel free to adapt the tools to the audience you are working with.
- Prepare tools in advance to show to parents, such as weekly planners, wheels of emotions and practical visuals on concrete tips.⁸
- Assess the need for a translator depending on the audience you are catering to.
- Think about the layout of the room, opting for a round layout without a table.
- Whenever possible, organise childcare by qualified staff for parents who need it.



Resources

All the resources listed above can be downloaded from the DCI-Belgium website.

⁶ <https://www.dei-belgique.be/>

⁷ Educational card game "Ordinary educational violence: how can we do things differently?", Mpedia, <https://www.mpedia.fr/outil-jeu-pedagogique-violences-educatives-ordinaires-comment-faire-autrement/?lo=75152>

⁸ Tools available on the DEI website - Padlet

A FEW POINTS OF REFERENCE



1. SO-CALLED ORDINARY EDUCATIONAL VIOLENCE (SOEV)

The International Convention on the Rights of the Child recognises that every child, without any discrimination whatsoever, has the right to education and to quality learning opportunities (article 28), as well as the right to protection from all forms of physical or mental violence (article 19). Every child therefore has the right to a non-violent education: an education that respects their physical and mental integrity⁹. However, the use of violence by adults to educate children remains a reality (for more information, see the survey conducted by Defence for Children International - Belgium in 2020)¹⁰. Often used in France, the acronym SOEV (“VEO” in French) refers to **Violence** (physical, psychological or verbal) used towards children for **Educational** purposes (for their “good”, to make them behave “well”) which then becomes culturally accepted and tolerated; it thus becomes “**Ordinary**”¹¹. We add the word “**So-called**” to emphasise that violence is never educational.

A distinction should be made between so-called ordinary educational violence and interventions designed to protect a child from violent behaviour by another child or by the child themselves. Thus, “*The Committee on the Rights of the Child recognises that parenting and caring for children, especially babies and young children, frequently requires physical actions and interventions to protect them, but these are very different from the deliberate use of force to inflict a degree of pain, discomfort or humiliation for punitive purposes.*”¹² However, it is important to stress that even physical interventions designed to protect children, if they are violent, may have a real negative and damaging impact.

It should also be pointed out that a non-violent educational approach does not call for laxity or the absence of a disciplinary framework, rules and sanctions. In fact, a lax educational approach could also be harmful to children.

2. ABUSE AND VIOLENCE

Abuse is defined as “*any situation of physical violence, physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse or serious neglect that compromises a child's physical, psychological or emotional development. An abusive attitude or behaviour may be intentional or unintentional.*”¹³

Physical violence includes any act that violates a person's physical integrity.

Mental violence “*as referred to in the Convention, is often described as psychological maltreatment, mental abuse, verbal abuse and emotional abuse or neglect and this can include: (a) All forms of persistent harmful interactions with the child, for example, conveying to children that they are worthless, unloved, unwanted, endangered or only of value in meeting another's needs; (b) Scaring, terrorizing and threatening; exploiting and corrupting; spurning and rejecting; isolating, ignoring and favouritism; (c) Denying emotional responsiveness; neglecting mental health, medical and educational needs; (d) Insults, name-calling, humiliation, belittling, ridiculing and hurting a child's feelings; (e) Exposure to domestic violence; (f) Placement in solitary confinement, isolation or humiliating or degrading conditions of detention; and (g) Psychological bullying and hazing⁸ by adults or other children, including via information and communication technologies (ICTs) such as mobile phones and the Internet (known as ‘cyberbullying’)*”¹⁴

“*Psychological abuse is particularly difficult to identify. When it exists in an unmistakable form, it is made up of the repetition of malicious and denigrating remarks, verbal attacks and insults aimed at the child's person, bullying, humiliations, vexations, and more subtly broken hopes, false promises, retaliation, contempt for the child's intentions and negative connotations of their healthy reactions.*”¹⁵

Exposure to domestic violence is also recognised as psychological violence.

⁹ See G. Mathieu (2020). Le droit de l'enfant à une éducation non violente : quand l'Etat belge reste sourd aux injonctions du droit international et européen. in G. Mathieu, N. Colette-Baseccqz, S. Wattier, & M. Nihoul (eds.), *L'étranger, la veuve et l'orphelin...Le droit protège-t-il les plus faibles ? Liber amicorum Jacques Fierens* (pp. 143-158).

¹⁰ DEI website, 'La violence dite Educative Ordinaire', <https://www.dei-belgique.be/index.php/modes-d-action/plaidoyer-et-lobbying/vdeo.html>, consulted on 24.04.2023

¹¹ Stop VEO website, 'La Violence Educative Ordinaire', <https://stopveo.org/veo-violence-educative-ordinaire>, consulted on 13.03.23

¹² Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 8, 2006, § 14.

¹³ Decree on assistance for child victims of abuse of 12 May 2004, art 1, 4°.

¹⁴ Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 13, Para 21

¹⁵ M. Gérard (2014). A guide to preventing abuse. Time out 71, Yapaka, p.43

"All forms of activity with a sexual connotation proposed or undertaken by an adult towards a child are considered to be abuse, whether or not they are associated with physical coercion, threats, explicit or implicit blackmail, seduction or rewards. The status of the child and the level of maturity specific to their age, in such circumstances, always place them in a position of inequality, in a situation where they are subjected to an abuse of power".¹⁶

Neglect is defined as chronic inattention to a child's basic needs. Neglect [...] *"is a wide range of events detrimental to children's well-being, safety and health, both physical and mental. What they have in common is that they are passive behaviours, consisting of abstentions or omissions, whether intentional or not".¹⁷*

CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLENCE

SOEV may be used to make children obey through fear and stress, and to condition them (so that they do not repeat the same behaviour). *"Shock and conditioning are traumatic neurobiological mechanisms. Because of their neurological immaturity, children's brains are highly sensitive to pain and stress, much more so than adults', and they are much more exposed to neurological damage and psychotraumatic consequences in the event of even 'minimal' violence".¹⁸*

Numerous studies attest to the many negative consequences of corporal punishment and, more generally, of SOEV on children's physical and mental health, both in the short and long term:

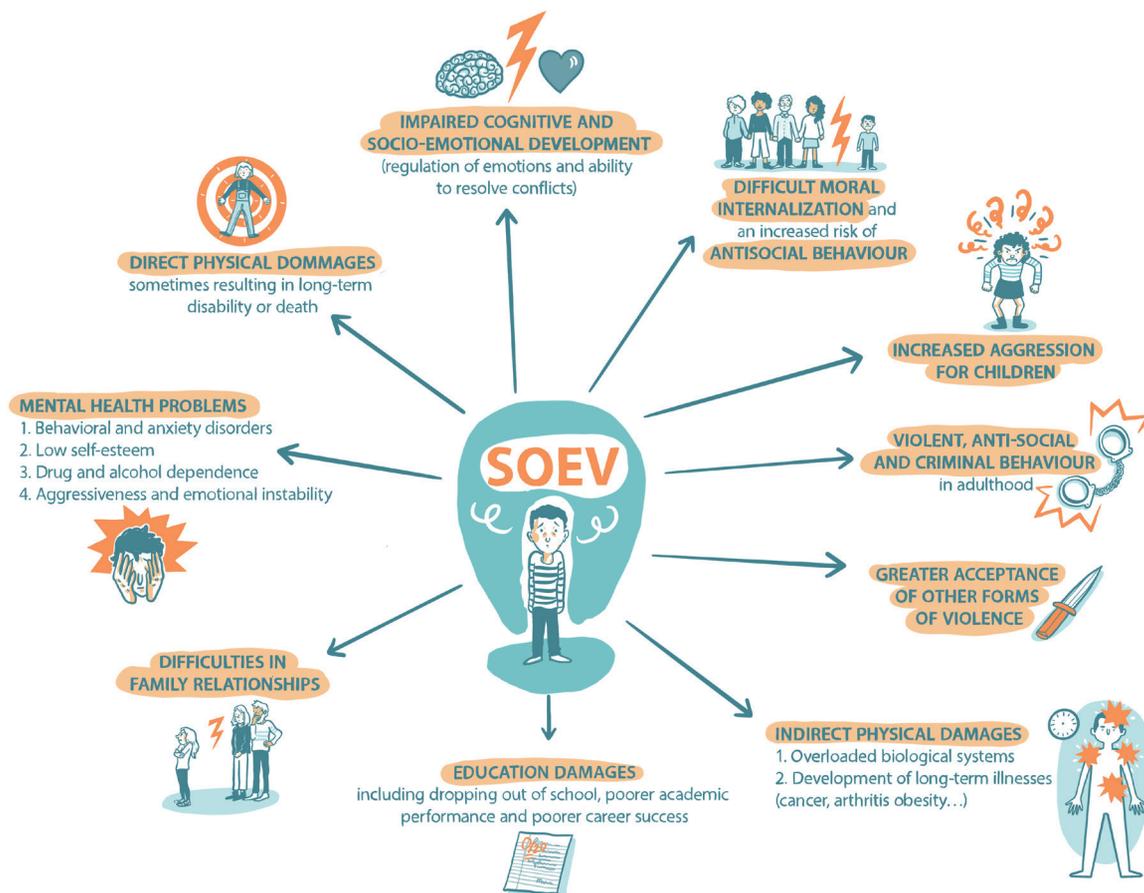
- direct physical damage, sometimes resulting in serious injury, long-term disability or death;
- mental health problems, including behavioural and anxiety disorders, depression, hopelessness, low self-esteem, self-harm and suicide attempts, alcohol and drug dependency, aggression and emotional instability, which continue into adulthood;
- impaired cognitive and socio-emotional development, particularly in the regulation of emotions and the ability to resolve conflicts;
- damage in the field of education, including dropping out of school, poorer academic results and lower professional achievement;
- difficulty in internalising ethics codes and an increased risk of antisocial behaviour;
- increased aggression in children;
- violent, anti-social and criminal behaviour in adulthood;
- indirect physical damage due to overloaded biological systems, including the development of cancers, alcohol-related problems, migraine, cardiovascular disease, arthritis and obesity, which continue into adulthood;
- greater acceptance of and recourse to other forms of violence;
- difficulties in family relationships.¹⁹

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p.24.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p.35.

¹⁸ M. Salmona, (2014). Fessées et gifles : les punitions corporelles entraînent phobies, Toc et... désobéissance. <https://leplus.nouvelobs.com/contribution/1281435-fessees-et-gifles-les-punitions-corporelles-entraident-phobies-toc-et-desobeissance.html>, consulté le 24.04.2023

¹⁹ WHO, 'Corporal punishment and health', <https://www.who.int/fr/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/corporal-punishment-and-health>, consulté le 24.03.2023



4. PROTECTING CHILDREN

As explained above, violence can take many forms. Children can be victims, witnesses and perpetrators of violence, at home, at school, in out-of-school activities, in the justice system, offline and online. Socially or culturally accepted forms of violence against children are deeply rooted barriers in the EU, where to date, only 23 EU countries have completely banned corporal punishment.

National child protection systems are put in place to protect children from violence. Strengthening child protection systems was the main theme of the 2015 European Forum on the Rights of the Child, during which ten principles for integrated child protection systems were discussed.²⁰ However, the efforts made to date are proving insufficient. We invite you to consult the research by the Fundamental Rights Agency for a recent analysis of the issue.²¹

The 116 111 is toll-free helpline available in 32 European countries for immediate support and advice, concern affecting children and young people, respectively.

For more information on corporal punishment and its consequences, visit the End Violence Against Children - End Corporal Punishment website.²²

²⁰ European Commission website: [Combating violence against children and protecting children - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2024/mapping-child-protection-systems-eu-update-2023), consulted on 26.10.23

²¹ <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2024/mapping-child-protection-systems-eu-update-2023>

²² <https://endcorporalpunishment.org/fr>, consulted on 15.12.23

QUESTIONING YOUR PROFESSIONAL STANCE

Foreword by Delphine Hubert, a long-time trainer and facilitator.



You're about to dive into a tool that offers practical ways of dealing with so-called ordinary educational violence, a subject that can be complicated to tackle. It is therefore essential to question your own professional stance before getting started. In order to tackle any sensitive subject, non-judgement is essential, to avoid losing participants and to effect change. The subject of SOEV affects everyone. There are many different ways of being a facilitator, just as there are many different methods of facilitation. We can create, invent and innovate, and we can find a whole range of tools, manuals and ideas for content quite easily, depending on the objectives being pursued. What is not easy to learn, however, is the attitude to adopt when we lead a meeting. And yet we've all at least once tried out carefully and intelligently prepared events which, without us understanding why, didn't go as we'd imagined. We often look for explanations in our methodologies and content, sometimes even in the audience itself, and yet we don't think much about our attitude, which requires us to really question ourselves.

Questioning yourself

Facilitating a group, whatever the audience, requires us to constantly question our facilitation practices. As a professional, we have a tendency to immerse ourselves in the content and follow it step by step, without necessarily asking ourselves: "What kind of facilitator am I? What content do I need to master beforehand?"

Getting to know yourself

Above all, we invite you to take the time to question your beliefs, your values, your principles and your limits. You may be confronted with sometimes difficult, even accusatory, testimonials. By preparing yourself for this, you will be able to move away from the polarity of good and evil and simply welcome the words that are shared with you.

Knowing the content

Knowing the content and being comfortable and confident with the theory behind the presentations will enable you to observe the group's interactions and bounce back more easily during discussions. This will enable you to accompany the theory with examples that will make most of the concepts more accessible.

Being effective also means knowing your skills, juggling them so that you are completely at ease with both the subject and the audience, and trusting yourself as a professional is your main asset. It also means believing in the participants' ability to take an active role in the meetings.

A few theoretical points of reference

We talk about **pedagogy** as soon as someone is in front of a group and has to work on knowledge. However, when we are facilitators dealing with adults who arrive with their own stories, experiences and objectives, we quickly discover that facilitating in the traditional way, as in school, is not for everyone and does little to help us achieve our objectives. For adult education, and especially when dealing with sensitive subjects such as child-rearing, we use the concepts of **andragogy** and **heutagogy**.

Andragogy allows learners to be independent in their learning, which is based on experience and centred on a problem to be solved. The sources of motivation are therefore personal, and the facilitator must create a climate of trust, collaboration, respect and openness.

The **heutagogy**, on the other hand, places learners in an interdependent relationship, regularly questioning them through their experiences. The facilitator offers resources, but the learners choose their own path according to their objectives. In this case, learning is an opportunity they can grasp, based on the sharing of experiences, reflective analysis

and interaction. The facilitator acts as a guide, knows how to work with others, is creative, at ease, juggles skills in all situations and has a good sense of efficiency. Whether they want to or not, facilitators have a certain amount of power when it comes to tackling subjects such as those covered in this booklet. It is important to try to relinquish some of this power to the group, to abolish as far as possible the distinctions between facilitator and learner, while remaining true to the objectives and the framework.

The main objective is to do everything within our power to create the conditions for genuine dialogue²³.

Taking action

If, as facilitators, we were to work with you on the theme of the facilitator's professional attitude, we would not see ourselves as facilitators who know and who are going to pass on knowledge to you; we would start from your experiences, both successful and unsuccessful, in your terms. We would let you share your experiences without interfering, without judging, and we would then invite the group to analyse the points in common, to list the strengths and areas for improvement, to create a summary and to supplement it with more theoretical elements. To back up our comments, we invite you to find out about the various points of theory contained in this tool, but also to train yourself in tools for creating collective intelligence, active participation, and daring to go beyond your content.

Facilitators are also human beings with their own experiences and moods, and can sometimes be shaken during a presentation. If this is the case, they should take a break and ask themselves what is not working for them, and if possible, ask the group for help, and make several suggestions to unblock a situation or listen to their suggestions.

It can take many years to feel totally at ease with a group, and a lot of soul-searching too. Let's not feel too guilty about it - let's continuously question our practices and remember that the job of group leader is something you learn throughout your career.

²³ To find out more about the notion of education for dialogue and the emergence of authentic speech: Paulo Freire's "Pedagogy of the Oppressed".

PROPOSED STRUCTURE FOR THE WORKSHOPS



WORKSHOPS - FIRST MEETING



Objectives

- Reflecting on **parenthood**. Taking the time to identify what is difficult for me, what causes me stress and what makes me feel better.
- Discover **different educational practices** based on everyday examples and exchanges with other parents.
- Discover the families of **emotions and their functions**.



INTRODUCTION

WELCOME AND PRESENTATION OF THE 2-DAY PROGRAMME



20 minutes



Paper and coloured markers

Pay particular attention to this **welcome** time. Parents will probably arrive with expectations and questions. Before you start, ask parents to write on a sheet of paper or write for them: their first name, their child's first name and the child's age. Start by introducing yourself and the context of your meetings. Then go round the first names.

PARENTING IN PICTURES

Individual introspection exercise



20 minutes



Photolanguage path



Sub-objective: Invite participants to symbolise their current parenting in images, to take the time to question their representation of parenting.



Scatter images of paths on the floor and invite participants to choose one that represents their parenting. What image represents their parenting today? You can also ask the parents about their expectations at the two meetings. What would they like to leave with?

Suggest that parents who wish to do so either show the picture or show it and share their reasoning. Everyone says their first name before showing their picture..



Note to the facilitator

- After each contribution, summarise what was said by each parent in a few words. At the end of the round, you can highlight the common points, the concerns, the shared hopes, the happiness and the expectations that bear witness to the many different types of parenting that exist. This can be a great opportunity to forge links as a group, to see that they are not alone.
- To bridge the gap between parents' expectations and the objectives of the workshops, inform them of the programme that awaits them. Present them with the general and specific objectives for the two days. You can also display them in the room so that they are not forgotten, allowing you to come back to them when necessary.

Below is an **example of how the objectives are presented:**

"On this first day, we will help you to identify the strengths that will help you be there for yourself and respect your needs. We're convinced of the importance of taking everyone's needs into account in the relationship: the child and the parent both have equally legitimate needs. We'll start with ourselves and work our way up to nurturing the relationship we share with our child. We'll be exchanging knowledge between parents, because we all have resources to contribute.

During the second meeting, we will openly question your own relationship with punishment. We will identify the causes and consequences of violent discipline. Finally, we will discover and try out other tools and practices for combining firmness and care, to promote a balance that respects the needs of both child and parent."

LIFE RULES



5 minutes



Posters showing some of the rules of life²⁴

Sub-objective: Create a common framework

Suggest that participants follow a few rules to ensure they have a good time throughout the sessions. Stress that the facilitators are the enforcers of the rules and of this framework, which will enable discussions to take place in a friendly manner so that participants do not feel judged.



Note to the facilitator

- If you have the opportunity to see the parents often, don't hesitate to create a joint charter from the outset. Failing that, to be effective, come with a basic set of rules and suggest that participants add a rule.
- If you are coming to run these workshops as part of a specific support programme for a group that has already been set up, don't hesitate to check with the group leader whether any rules already exist.

"THE TIGHTROPE WALKER"²⁵



65 minutes = Explanation (10') - Individual exercise (10') - Group exercise (45')



Per person: an A3 scale + a set of pre-cut factors, tubes of glue, scissors and post-it notes

Sub-objective: Take some time for myself to identify how I'm doing, what resources I have and what is currently draining my energy as a parent. Because taking care of the adult will enable us to take care of the child.

• Explanation (10')

Start a discussion with the group by asking:

"Do you agree with me that there are days when it's easier/more enjoyable to be a parent and days when it's harder/sometimes even a real hassle? How do you recognise the days that go well?"

If necessary, ask again: "What do you observe in yourself? Your children? What are things like at home on those days? ". Let the participants express themselves in popcorn mode.

Emphasise that being a parent can be both a joy and a hardship, especially in the society and times we live in. Decide in advance what you want to share about the impact of society on parenthood. The discussion will

²⁴ Visual shared on the DCI website - <https://www.dei-belgique.be/index.php/projets/en-cours/preface.html>

²⁵ Activity invented by Nathalie Velu of La Ligue des Familles, adapted from the study "15 Years of Parental Burnout Research", Systematic Review and Agenda Article in press in Current Directions in Psychological Science Moira Mikolajczak¹, Kaisa Aunola², Matilda Sorkkila² & Isabelle Roskam¹ 1 UCLouvain, Belgium 2 University of Jyväskylä, Finland

highlight the difficulties of everyday life, as well as underlining the significant influence of the environment.

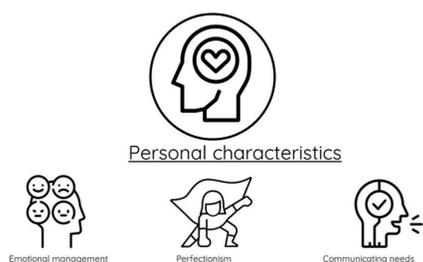
“Sometimes you can feel tired or even exhausted by your role as a parent. You can lose pleasure in the role. Relationships within the family can deteriorate: parent-child, but also with your partner. You may find yourself shouting at your child more than you would have liked, using violent gestures and then regretting it or not. You may feel sad, guilty or ashamed, feel very alone and not dare to talk about it.

Parental exhaustion occurs when we have had to put up with too many things that have cost us, stressed us out, tired us, etc., for too long, with too few resources to counterbalance them. (Use the visual of the scales here to help you symbolise what you’re saying) Becoming aware of this can help you find solutions: call on new resources (like a neighbour who comes to help us with the child’s homework), call on existing resources (get your grandmother to look after your child twice as often as before), reduce or eliminate certain things that are costing you (like cutting out trips to extra-curricular activities or reducing your parental perfectionism). What do you think makes it more difficult and burdensome for parents?” Could you give me a few examples? Allow parents to express themselves and facilitate discussion.

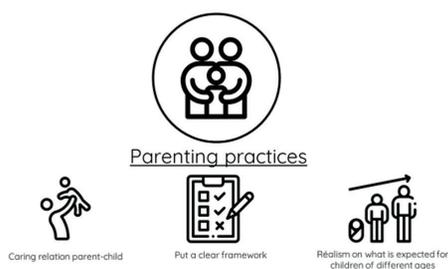
“On the other hand, what resources could you have? Could you give me some examples?”

Next, present the study carried out by Moira Mikolajczak, Kaisa Aunola, Matilda Sorkkila & Isabelle Roskam. This study highlights the factors that either recharge our batteries or drain our energy, factors that balance or unbalance our daily role as parents. In general, this validates what emerged spontaneously from the group’s responses. We’ve made them more accessible by adding emoticons to the text.²⁶ Feel free to change them and adapt them to your audience.

Present the factors to the group by showing the associated visuals²⁷:



Personal traits: my ability to manage my emotions, communicate my needs, my level of expectation in relation to my role as a parent. For example: “To what extent am I or am I not an anxious person?”



Parenting practices: ask yourself the questions “How is my parent-child relationship at the moment?” “To what extent are the rules clear?” “Does my child understand what is expected of them?” “Am I equipped to adapt my practices to my children’s ages?” “How realistic am I about what I can expect from my child considering their age?”

²⁶ Emoticons freely available on the flaticon website: <https://www.flaticon.com/fr/>

²⁷ Visual shared on the DCI website: <https://www.dei-belgique.be/index.php/projets/en-cours/preface.html>



Coparental team



Emotional and practical mutual support



Agreement on educational values



Underline what the other is doing

The co-parenting team: this means mutual emotional and practical support from my partner, agreement on educational values, appreciation of my partner's successes and actions, etc.



Family organisation



Time management



Space management and storage



Routines clear and repeated habits

Family organisation: time management, storage space management, routines.



Health



Body

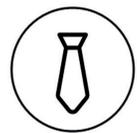


Power supply



Sleep

Health: This refers to your relationship with your body, your diet and your sleep.



Work



Work-life balance



Job satisfaction



Journeys

Work: questioning the balance between my work and my private life. "Does my work weigh heavily on me at the moment, or do I feel stressed?" "What impact does commuting have on my daily life?" If a parent doesn't have a job and it's lacking then it's worth putting it on the side of stressors, things that cost energy.



Socio-demography



Country



Gender



Age of kids

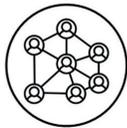


Number of kids



Single parent

Socio-demographic characteristics: the country in which the parent lives, their gender, the number of children in their family, the age of their children, their status as a parent (single, couple), etc.



External or internal support



Relational



Practical / logistics



Childcare

Support from outside or from within, i.e. the parent's social environment, practical or logistical help, and the possibility of childcare.



Specific factors



Children with disabilities



Nearby in need



Life events

Specific factors: These include being the parent of a sick or disabled child, having to care for someone close to you, or other life events such as moving house, marriage, divorce or death.



• Individual exercise (10')

Participants are invited to use a scale to represent what energises them and what causes them stress. If you are facilitating couples, invite each partner to make their own scale.



In concrete terms, each parent is asked to place the factors presented above on the scale: on the left if it is a stress factor, which takes up energy, and on the right if it is a resource. The more the factor is placed on the left, the more it is a resource factor, and the more it is placed on the right, the more it is a stress factor. For greater clarity, don't hesitate to ask the participants to note down two “++” on the sheet at the end of the resource side, in the centre of the scale a “+” and a “-” and at the end of the cost side two “--”. This will help to emphasise the notion of different degrees.

Once the scale has been drawn up, invite the participants to take some time out for individual introspection, with each of them noting in the tool for parents the factor that is the most rewarding and the factor that costs them the most. Why not repeat this exercise some time later, to see how things have changed? The booklet contains everything you need to do it again.



Note to the facilitator

- What we're talking about here is emotional outbursts, and some parents who are in this state may end up behaving violently, which is not the same thing as SOEV (being firmly convinced that violence has an educational value), but it's important to talk about it to understand the difference.
- Adapt what you do or do not share as information about the study on which the activity is based.
- Tools: rephrase, invite participants to share in popcorn mode.
- When carrying out the weighting, don't hesitate to give examples and to question each person to encourage them to think about and understand the activity. Ask them not to glue the factors together straight away, but to think about how best to position the factor. There are also blank pieces of paper if participants want to write something else.
- Observe if a participant has a majority of factors on the side that takes energy, it would be advisable to talk to them during the exercise and at the end of the session. This very visual moment can be a source of sadness or awareness for some people, who may feel the need to talk about it. It's important to welcome the emotion with a great deal of empathy and kindness. You can then direct the person to the appropriate support services if necessary. Carry with you the useful numbers listed at the end of this guide. Why not write them down on the board or hand them over at the end of the exercise?

Emphasise that the first step is to become aware of the current balance. When exhaustion is present, encourage them to remain hopeful, because there are solutions, such as finding someone with whom they can share their suffering and who will be a sympathetic listener (a friend, a parent at school, a neighbour, a GP, a psychologist or therapist, etc.). Emphasise the importance of being taken care of in order to regain energy and then be able to act on your balance. That's what we're going to do in this second part of the exercise.

• Two-stage group exercise



45 minutes



Each factor on an A3 poster + post-it notes in two different colours

Sub-objective: Discover positive parenting techniques from other parents

First, give the participants two post-it notes of different colours, for example one green and one red. Decide which post-it represents the factor that takes up the most energy (e.g. red) and which represents the factor that replenishes the most (e.g. green). In our example, each parent has one green and one red post-it note. Place the factors represented on A3 posters on the floor and invite the parents to place their post-it notes on them. For example, if a dad feels that family organisation costs him the most, he will stick his red post-it note on the poster labelled "family organisation". And if it's the co-parenting team that replenishes him the most? He'll stick his green post-it note on the poster with that name.

As a result, the posters will be covered in post-it notes left by the participants.

Ask the group what they see and what it says about the group.



Note to the facilitator

Take the time to listen to the participants, who are the first to point out what is causing them stress, but it is also essential to point out each person's resources.

Secondly, ask the participants to ask each other some questions: "I see that some people have techniques for organising their families, but I have trouble with that. How do you manage your time in the morning?" A participant can either ask the group a question, or spontaneously pass on a tip that has helped them personally (a lot) and that could help other parents in the group.



Note to the facilitator

- Invite parents to talk to each other during informal breaks, or even to keep in touch. For example: if X has identified having clear rules with their child as a resource, I could consider sharing tools with them. This also enables parents to realise that they are not the only ones who feel the way they do.
- Make a note of all the resources, techniques and tools shared during this time, to leave a record for after the meetings. Invite parents to make notes directly in their booklet.
- Provide input if you know of any interesting tools or resources for parents, depending on the needs that emerge from the exercise. During the discussions, questions are often asked about how to

manage the child's emotions, the difficulties of dealing with discipline, and a lot of personal information is exchanged. It's crucial to maintain a framework and ensure that what is said is not judgemental. Ask participants to rephrase if necessary.

- Remember that every family is unique, and what suits one family may not suit another. So only use the tips that work for you.

BREAK (15')

EMOTIONS AND ME²⁸

Exercise in sub-groups



45 minutes



Emoticons of emotions (one per emotion), A3 sheet of paper, coloured markers

Sub-objective: Discover emotions and their functions.



During the previous activity, some parents will have shared situations and everyday events that are difficult to manage because they are linked to the (non)management of the child's emotions, as well as those of the adult. Identifying and understanding the purpose of an emotion can enable parents to question what the emotion is saying, both for themselves and for their child. The point here is to welcome the emotion, all emotions, without classifying them as good or bad. Children need to experience them, so that they can satisfy their need for emotional security and become adults capable of dealing with their emotions.

We have selected four emotions: anger, sadness, fear and joy. For the sake of simplicity and accessibility, we have decided to stick to these four families of emotions.²⁹

Give each participant an emoticon representing an emotion. The emotions given out are anger, sadness, fear and joy. Make sure they keep the emotion they have received to themselves. The participants will have to wander around the space and mime, acting out their emotion, using their face and body to recognise other participants who are acting out the same emotion. To make it easier, and if you see participants who seem embarrassed, don't hesitate to ask them to imitate their children in that emotion. Once the families of emotions have been formed, sub-groups are created. You will have a group representing fear, one representing anger, one representing sadness and one representing joy.

Each sub-group will have to represent on an A3 sheet, by writing or drawing:

- 1) What did they see and what did the others do to make the emotion recognisable? We're looking for information here about the non-verbal expression of emotion.
- 2) When do I feel this emotion? Or when do we feel this emotion?
- 3) What do I need? What do we need? How do I get out of it? How do we get out of this emotion?

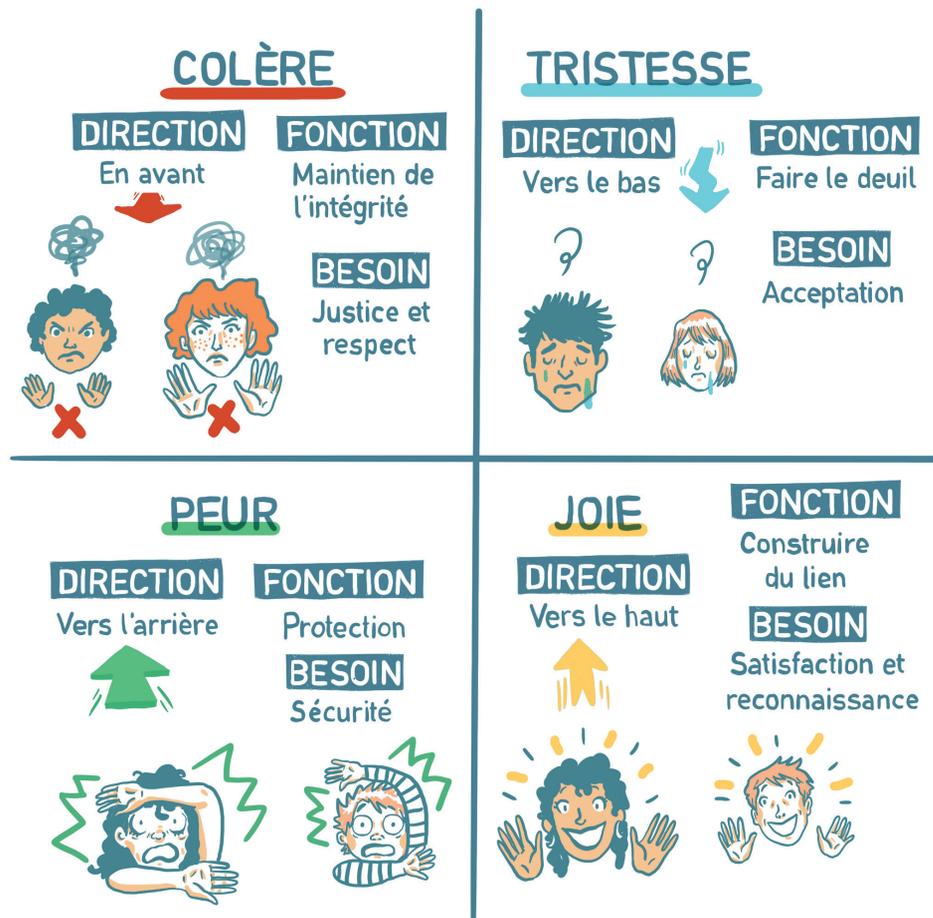
Ask each group to present the results of their discussions. After the first group, give a more theoretical presentation explaining the visible/behavioural (non-verbal) characteristics of emotion, its function and the underlying need behind it, building on the group's contributions.

Emotions and their functions

Suggest a more theoretical presentation of emotions and their functions.

²⁸ Game inspired by the "Graine de médiateur" manual (University of Peace)

²⁹ Graines de médiateurs en maternelles "apprentissage des habiletés sociales pour les enfants de 2 ans et demi à 7 ans.(pg63) - Julie Duetz, Pascaline Gossuin, 2020 - Université de la paix



"Etymologically, 'motion' evokes movement and the prefix e- indicates direction: outwards. Emotion would therefore be a movement towards the outside, an impulse that arises within us and speaks to those around us, a sensation that tells us who we are and puts us in touch with others."³⁰ It's important to stress that no family of emotions is negative or positive. It's how we respond to the emotion that can make us feel uncomfortable or have consequences for others.

Fear



Its primary function is to protect us, to frighten us when we are faced with danger or a threat. It pushes us to act, to flee, to go backwards. "A useful fear is moderate and gives us energy to protect ourselves from something. Only excessive fear or the fear of fear can be paralyzing and harmful (losing your words, being frozen in place, becoming agitated, etc.)."³¹

Anger



Its primary function is to keep our integrity, and it is linked to the need for justice and respect. Anger is not violent in itself; it's the way I deal with it, the way I express it, that can be problematic. It forces us to take action to change things, to move forward.

³⁰ pg 4 Module 3 Certificate in positive conflictmanagement with young people 2018-2019 - Trainer Christelle Lacour
³¹ pg5 Module 3 Brevet en gestion positive des conflits avec les jeunes 2018-2019 - Trainer Christelle Lacour

Sadness



Its function is to tell us that it is impossible to change things, to take action. Learning to manage our sadness will enable us to mourn, to respond to the need to accept an event over which we have no control. Sadness weighs us down, taking time for us to understand and accept.

Joy



The function of joy is to build relationships; it means that one of our needs is satisfied or at least recognised. Joy makes us want to share, it radiates and pushes us upwards.



Note to the facilitator

- Ask the other parents questions after a group has presented an emotion. It will be particularly interesting to discuss strategies for managing your own emotions and those of your children.
- Share information about managing children's emotions. Now is the time to build a bridge between managing adults' emotions and children's emotions. Emphasise the fact that it's a learning process, that most of us haven't learned how to manage our emotions and that we've developed different techniques. It is therefore possible to learn. This can help in everyday life with children and helping them discover their emotions. You can present emotion management techniques for children and adults.
- Emphasise the absence of intellectual maturity in children. They are not mini-adults, so we can't expect the same of a child as we would of an adult.

CONCLUSION



15 minutes

Sub-objective: Wrap up, take the time to conclude the workshop

In a large group, ask the participants to briefly share a tool, a moment or a question that they will remember.



WORKSHOPS - SECOND MEETING



Sub-objectives

- **Questioning** your relationship with discipline and punishment and tackling the issue of violence in education
- **Learning about SOEV and its consequences for children**
- **Discovering** and trying out **positive parenting techniques**
- **Finding out about existing resources and help to support parenthood**

ICEBREAKERS



20 minutes

Sub-objective: Welcome the group and reactivate the content covered during the first meeting

Depending on the size of your group, suggest a game or an opportunity to talk about what was discussed at the first meeting.



Note to the facilitator

Go back over the topics discussed in the first meeting and use this time to take stock of some of the non-violent techniques already shared. Some parents will have talked about their “discomfort”, their difficulties in dealing with some of their children’s behaviour. Use this as an opportunity to talk about discipline and punishments.

PUNISHMENT AND ME



45 minutes



2 types of post-it notes, a poster with two columns, markers



Sub-objective: Allow time for reflection on the parenting practices that I have experienced and those that I am providing today. Examine your relationship with punishment and discover the different types of violence, including SOEV.

• Individual exercise (15')

Punishment or discipline is at the heart of many parents’ thoughts, and taking the time to talk about it allows us to see where we stand and what influences our choice of punishment or non-punishment.

First, ask the parents to complete the following sentence on a post-it note: "When I was a child, punishment in my family was ...". They can write down the types of punishment or the emotions they felt. Once they have completed the post-it, ask them to stick it on the poster, which is divided into two columns (one column for post-its relating to the participants' childhood).

Then ask them to complete a second sentence: "Today, in my daily life as a parent, punishment is ..." and stick the post-it note in the second column (Column for post-its representing the types of punishment they give their child).

Read out loud the post-it notes in the two columns.



Note to the facilitator

- Inform the participants that we are going to read the answers written on the post-its without questioning who put them there. The aim is to get an overall picture and not to intrude on everyone's private life.
- Offer to write or help people who are not at ease with writing. It's important to stress that spelling mistakes are acceptable. This type of moment can be stressful for an audience that is less comfortable with writing. If you need to, you can use other tools such as word pictures.³²

• Group exercise (30')

Ask the parents what stands out from this moment. "What do these two columns tell us?" "What practices were more common before?" "What is the difference between the two columns?"

Parents will point out the existence of more violent practices and if they don't, don't hesitate to talk about it. It is important to specify that sometimes our experience was more violent than we would have liked.

Ask the parents about the types of violence that exist, based on the suggestions written on the post-it notes. Depending on their answers, suggest a more theoretical classification of the types of violence (psychological, physical, sexual, neglect, SOEV, etc.). Also ask them about possible consequences for the child's development, drawing on the theory described at the beginning of the booklet.



Note to the facilitator

- When you talk about SOEV, don't hesitate to stress that the parents who use this violence are convinced that it is for educational purposes. There's no question of not loving your child.
- It's important to explain that SOEV is different from violence linked to an emotional outburst, when you can't take it anymore. It's important to stress that some people believe that violence teaches and educates children. And make the connection with the consequences for children.
- Be careful about the words you use. The issue of domestic violence will clearly be raised during this time. It is essential not to judge the parents present, or their parents. The aim here is to reveal the different types of violence, to raise awareness of the notion of so-called ordinary educational violence and to present the consequences of violence on a child's development. During this session, some parents may admit to using SOEV, so it's important to be prepared for these exchanges and this discussion, despite your own personal point of view.
- Emphasise the positive changes in practice.

³² Tool created by the ASBL le grain de sable: <https://www.legrainasbl.org/outil-pedagogique/motus/>

- Write down the parents' answers about the types of violence and their consequences in the form of a table or something similar, but make a note of them so that they are easier to understand.
- Identify the parents for whom this is more complicated and don't hesitate to go and meet them afterwards to discuss things more privately.



BREAK

NON-VIOLENT PARENTING TECHNIQUES - RAISING AWARENESS ABOUT SOEV



60 minutes



A4 images from the STOP OEV 'How to do it differently' tool)³³

Sub-objective: Discuss non-violent parenting practices

• Exercise in sub-groups

In the previous activity, some non-violent practices were written on the post-it notes. Refer to some of them to understand the difference, and suggest an activity to find concrete practices that can be used on a daily basis.

Form sub-groups. The parents are given two situations per group, everyday situations illustrating a parent and their child, conflict situations in which a parent might resort to SOEV.

- A child and a parent in the park, the parent wants to leave but the child does not. The parent pulls him by the arm to drag him home.
- A child spills her drink and her parent gets angry: "Are you serious? It's always the same with you!"
- A child has done something the parent finds really stupid. The parent is annoyed and says: "You're getting on my nerves, you're going to get a spanking"

³³ Educational card game "Ordinary educational violence: how can we do things differently", Mpedia, <https://www.mpedia.fr/outil-jeu-pedagogique-violences-educatives-ordinaires-comment-faire-autrement/?lo=75152>, consulted on 09.05.23



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The idea is to consider alternatives that would be better for both parents and children. Parents are invited to work together to come up with ideas for doing things differently.

• **Group exercise**

After 20 minutes, invite the parents to return to the large group. Each sub-group will present one of the two situations. Either the one that the parents would like others' feedback on, or the one where there were the most suggestions, etc.

The facilitator presents the card to the large group and writes the suggested practices on a board. Don't hesitate to ask the others questions so that you can share as many practices as possible. The table is divided into three parts: either the solution anticipates difficulties ('before' column), or it is a technique that can be used at the time ('during' column), or it is a technique that can be used afterwards ('after' column).



Note to the facilitator

- Find two situations per group, everyday situations illustrating a parent and their child, conflict situations in which a parent might resort to SOEV.
- Throughout the event, take care not to make the parents feel guilty.
- Offer parents the chance to discover the concept of a child's needs with a clear visual aid.³⁵
- Share information with parents about the child's behaviours and their functions. Draw on the theory of functional analysis.³⁶
- Prepare tools in advance to show to parents, such as weekly planners, emotion wheels and practical visuals on concrete tips and tools adapted to different ages of child.

BREAK

³⁴ Illustrations: Léna Piroux

³⁵ On the DCI website: <https://www.dei-belgique.be/index.php/projets/en-cours/preface.html>

³⁶ Theory by Marie-Hélène Bouchez, Visual shared on the DCI website: <https://www.dei-belgique.be/index.php/projets/en-cours/preface.html>

THERE IS HELP



45 minutes



Posters or blackboard, markers



Objective: To introduce parents to organisations that provide help with parenting, organisations that offer support in the event of violence committed against their children by them or by other adults, as well as places where children can be looked after or where they can meet other parents.

Ask the parents about the support they know about in the event of violence and add what is missing. Ask them what organisations exist. Add the missing numbers and associations to a table.

There are child helplines all over the world. Do not hesitate to consult the “childhelplineinternational” site³⁷ to see what is available in your country. Take some time in advance to make a list of existing supports, and more specifically in the region or neighbourhood where the parents present live. This discussion will enable you to inform the parents of available support. First of all, don't hesitate to refer to child helplines, if there are any, and the information lines for adults on the subject of violence against children. Then, you can also mention the telephone lines or services that exist to help adults, such as domestic violence, sexual abuse, dark thoughts, etc. This is a good time to mention important contacts if you need them.

And don't forget to talk about parents' time for themselves. Parents and children need to do activities or have time to themselves. Ask what parents do for themselves, what activities they do with their children, etc. Make a note of the suggestions and ideas put forward by the parents and add the resources you have collected in advance. Places for parents and children to meet, platforms for finding extra-curricular activities for children, anything that allows parents and children to have a good time.

Finally, we invite you to discover other tools for supporting and raising awareness of non-violent parenting on the “eurofam” website.³⁸



Note to the facilitator

- In advance, find out what helplines and hotlines for children and for parents exist in your country, in the region or even in the neighbourhood where the parents come from. Find out about existing support for families.
- Make a note of all the information that parents share and suggest that they record it in the participants' notebook.

³⁷ www.childhelplineinternational.org/, consulted on 05-12-23

³⁸ <https://eurofamnet.eu/>, consulted on 15.12.23

CONCLUSION



15 minutes

Sub-objective: Take the time to evaluate

In a large group, ask the participants to share in a few words what they learned today.



NOTES

A large rectangular area with a decorative orange border and horizontal dotted lines for writing. The border is composed of a repeating diamond-shaped pattern. The interior of the rectangle is filled with horizontal dotted lines, providing a guide for handwriting. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page.



FOR MORE INFO VISIT:

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