+ INCLUSIVE

EDUCATION
FROM REFLECTION TO ACTION

- GOOD PRACTICE MANUAL -

+INCLUSIVE EDUCATION:
FROM REFLECTION TO ACTION
- GOOD PRACTICES MANUAL -

This project is centered on the horizontal priority of the Erasmus+ program of "Inclusion and diversity in all areas of education, training, youth and sport" and aims to reduce the social exclusion of students with developmental disorders in the school context.

The main objective of this project is to share experiences and ideas between experienced partners in the educational field so that we can create digital resources aimed at informing and raising awareness about the importance of social inclusion for students with developmental disorders (ADHD, autism, cerebral palsy, down syndrome, dyslexia and other significant issues) at school. These resources are intended for use by school staff and pre-primary and primary school students.

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FICHA TÉCNICA

INCLUSIVE
EDUCATION

MODULE

01

MODULE 1

MODULE 1: INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Quality education is a right for every child. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) clearly express the aim of ensuring quality education for all and the importance of providing the holistic support necessary to develop each child's potential.

Quality education can only be achieved when each and every child, including the most marginalised and excluded, attends school and receives quality Inclusive Education that provides them with the learning necessary for life.

While Inclusive Education is a broad concept that includes all groups of children, this Handbook will focus specifically on children with physical, intellectual and sensory impairments.

1.1. FROM SPECIAL EDUCATION TO INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

For decades the organisational models of attending students with Special Educational Needs have resorted to Resource Centres which allowed the School to provide additional skills to be able to welcome students with difficulties.

Nevertheless, Special Units/Schools were also created, allowing students, even with more severe conditions of disability, to attend and share their education with other students from their community. The challenges were also cross-cutting: insufficient resources, sometimes inadequate resources, lack of organisation with the School, a whole set of circumstances that led to these responses becoming more and more "separate structures", structures of "special education". In some countries like Portugal, the Special Education teacher was seen as the only responsible and knowledgeable person for the teaching-learning processes of students with disabilities.

The use of the International Classification of Functioning (ICF) for the assessment and planning of students' intervention was (and still is, in some countries) used to label students and to assess their educational potential.

For these and other facts in the history of the School throughout Europe, it is transversal the importance of:

- Assume the paradigm shift from " special education " to " Inclusive Education"

- To stop using the term Special Educational Needs (SEN), assuming that categorisation can be useful but is not essential to find ways of intervention *(See Module 2)*

- Creating support measures that can be extended to all students.

- Creating in schools structures or functionalities that serve as "Learning Support Centres

- Creating and assigning competencies to multidisciplinary teams.

In almost all European countries, the area of Special and Inclusive Education has undergone rapid and profound changes that have altered the nature of an area that, for many years, was associated with a welfare perspective. "Thinking about the education of students with disabilities, within strictly educational parameters is a recent fact and still in many aspects constitutes an innovation". (Nogueira & Rodrigues, 2010) Disability is part of human diversity and people with disabilities are a heterogeneous group.

1.1.1 DIVERSITY IN EDUCATION

The creation in the 19th century of the school as we know it today sought an ethic of equality. It sought to welcome different people and, by giving them all the same rights, to establish a fair social regime as opposed to social regimes of brutal inequality and the absence of any measure promoting the rights of the poorest and most vulnerable.

The awareness of the need to make the school a structure that serves all students equally came up against the dimension of diversity.

If the school had been created to 'give everyone the same', how could it differentiate what it 'gave'? Would this not be a violation of the students' rights? (Rodrigues, 2018).

If the students are diverse, can they **all be taught as if they were one?**

If students are diverse, is it possible to assess their progress **with a single instrument?**
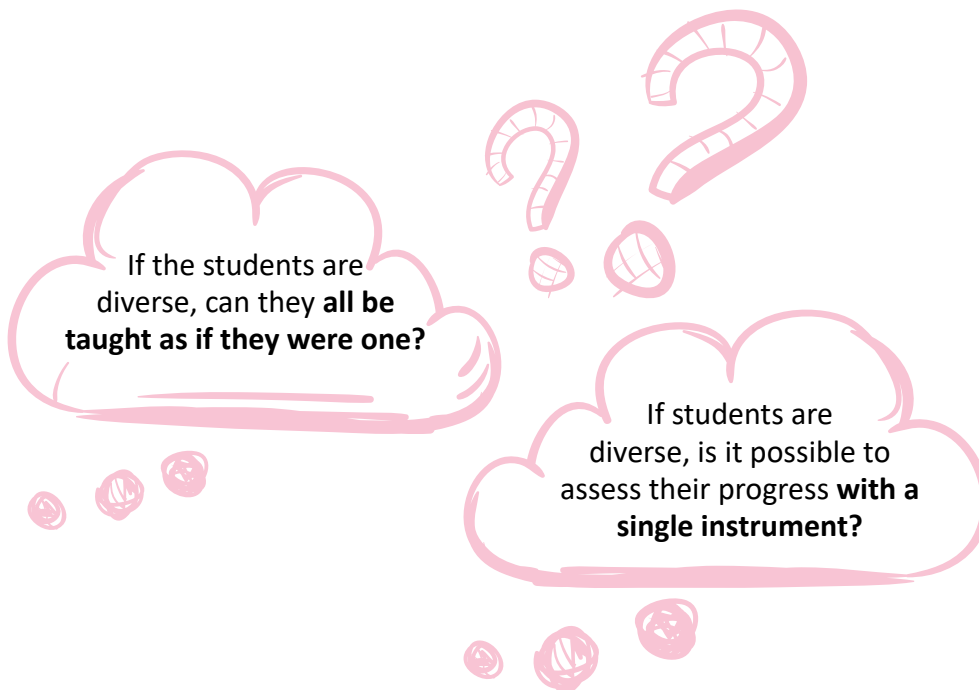
Many questions that draw our attention to an important turning point that must be assumed in a logic of Inclusive Education, that is, of "not leaving any student behind". In this sense, it is essential to "respond to the diversity of needs of all learners by increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion in and from education." (UNESCO, 2005).

> *"You can only value diversity if you know this diversity and it is not possible to have this knowledge without an ethic of valuing the participation of all in school."*
> *(Rodrigues, 2018)*

1.1.2.DIVERSITY vs. DIFFERENCE

Martha Minow in her book "Just schools: Pursuing equality in societies of difference" says that, we should question the way things are and look at difference as being a relationship with someone or something else and that we need to be very critical when we think about who we are judging to be different. Difference in itself is not a negative thing, nor does it cause inequality. Differences between people make societies more interesting. However, it is the meanings and values applied to these differences that make them harmful. (ORE, T. quoted in "Diversity and Inclusion in Education", Inês Alves and Eliot from the University of Glasgow, Cousera online course). The problem lies in the attention and importance attached to some of these 'differences'.

In an interview, Alan Dyson (2021) argues that when we perceive a student as being different, this creates dilemmas. The basis of these dilemmas is an intention as educators to treat all students as essentially the same and an equal and opposite intention to treat them as different. So at the same time we want to be fair and treat everyone the same, but we also want to treat each student as an individual and respond to their needs. This creates dilemmas every day in classrooms for educators.

There are three main areas where educators are faced with dilemmas (Norwich, cit in Alves, 2017):

1.   IDENTIFICATION.

Do we identify students we perceive to be different? Do we label them? Do we say they have Special Educational Needs or need additional support for learning or that they are disabled?

2.   PLACEMENT:

Is it better to place students we perceive as different in mainstream classes or 'special' classes, or is it better to find some kind of special school or a special environment?

3.   THE CURRICULUM.

Do we teach everyone the same thing? Do we allow different students to specialise and follow their own interests? Do we have a functional curriculum for some students and a more academic curriculum for others?

These are all dilemmas that educators are faced with. It is important to note that when faced with these dilemmas, teachers can find a solution to the situation, but there is no perfect solution. It is very important that as educators we can understand that inclusion is almost like a never ending process.

In a broader sense, Inclusion is about how we deal with diversity and difference, as well as social justice and equity of vulnerable groups within the education system.

More than developing policies, it is important that these are translated into concrete changes/practices. To this end, it is crucial to see individual differences not as problems but as opportunities for diverse and enriching learning.

Difference should be seen as a means for innovation and enrichment, benefiting all learners, regardless of their specificities.

In an inclusive education system, it is essential that teachers view the diversity present in the classroom in a positive light.

Attitudes towards difference are based on intolerance and abuse of power in order to create and perpetuate inequalities.Making schools inclusive can help make people painfully aware of their discriminatory attitudes and practices (Booth, &Ainscow, 2002).

Diversity is, however, a multifaceted concept that lends itself to multiple interpretations.

When we think about diversity and difference in the school context, other factors such as culture, ethnicity, nationality, gender, ... are added, such as the language of instruction being different from the one spoken by the students, notions of learning ability and style, as well as the notion of Special Educational Needs. (Alves, 2017)

Usually, diversity is presented in a more positive way: We want to value diversity; whereas difference tends to be used in a more negative way. When students' characteristics are problematic, then students are considered different from others.

Educational policies are mediators of the processes of constructing notions of diversity and difference, and present and past policies have a considerable impact on teachers' ways of thinking and acting. The school as we know it was at the origin of exclusion and segregation. The only difference is that student diversity is now everywhere in its many facets.

Inclusion in education implies thinking that the system changes to respond to the diverse characteristics of students. It is not the learners who should be invited into a pre-existing system, but the system that should be aware of and respond to the experiences and needs of the population.

1.1.3 EQUITY, EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

EQUITY AND EQUALITY

The EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child (European Commission, 2021) warns of the importance of the role of children as agents of change and the right of children to make full use of their potential. Also in this regard, the Human Rights Council (2019) says that laws and policies should explicitly include a 'non-rejection clause', prohibiting refusal of admission to mainstream schools and ensuring continuity in education.

"The ultimate aim of Inclusive Education systems is to ensure that all learners, regardless of age, have meaningful and high quality educational opportunities within their local community, alongside their friends and peers." (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2015 p. 1).

"Access to any form of education constitutes an equity issue that acts as a prerequisite for all other issues." (European Agency, 2020).

The responsibility to ensure equal opportunities for those in situations of exclusion lies not only with Governments, those who think and design education policies, but with all actors working in concert to support the lives of vulnerable people.

According to the European Agency, equity can cover:

- ✓ Equity in access to School.
- ✓ Equity in the distribution of learning opportunities and appropriate support.
- ✓ Equity in obtaining opportunities and chances for success in academic and social learning and transition opportunities.
- ✓ Equity in achieving personal autonomy during and after formal education and the integration opportunities offered to learners with SEN Special Educational Needs that support their inclusion in wider society (European Agency, 2011, p. 56).

In order for the principles of Equality and Equity to be integrated in Education policies, the following aspects are necessary:

- ✓ Valuing the presence, participation and achievement of ALL pupils, regardless of their difficulties and personal characteristics.
- ✓ Mapping and assessing barriers to education, participation and achievement, with particular attention to those learners who may be most at risk of underachievement, marginalisation or exclusion.
- ✓ Developing the capacities of teachers, as well as the system, creating learning and support environments, important for improving the quality of Education.
- ✓ Creating synergies between the school and other community stakeholders, with a view to promoting conditions for inclusive learning, as well as fostering a wider understanding of the principles of inclusion and equity.
- ✓ Implement change, recognising that inclusion and equity in Education is a continuous process.

It is stressed that bringing the principles of equity and inclusion into education policies requires the efforts and participation of other agencies, including health, social welfare and child protection services.

INCLUSION

The concept of Inclusion is present, more than ever, in the vocabulary of our society. If we reflect, the concept of inclusion is transversal to any area inherent to the subject's daily life. It is used in matters related to health, for example, up to education.

> *"Inclusion cannot exist to put an end to differences, but to make these differences (individual, behavioural, cultural...) find ways to unite in what they have in common and to learn and respect each other in what they are different. Inclusion is not based on needs, but on the rights of the subject."*
> *(Rodrigues, 2020, p.222.)*

Considering Inclusion from a rights-based perspective, we are focusing on the full development of the subject's personality, reinforcing the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Nevertheless, this perspective guides education towards promoting mutual understanding and tolerance.

"Inclusion can be understood not only as a vehicle to end segregation, but also as a commitment to creating schools that respect and value diversity, effectively address the needs of all children and aim to promote democratic principles. Inclusive Education is a set of values and beliefs related to equality and social justice, so that all children can participate in teaching and learning." (UNICEF, 2014, p.17)

BEING 'INCLUSIVE'

♥ *Means that everyone can access something or something.*

♥ *It is about fostering a sense of belonging in people so that they can be full participants in a particular group or community.*

INCLUSION IS NOT A PATH, A RIGHT.

INCLUSION IS TRANSVERSAL TO ALL RIGHTS; IT IS A VALUE, A CHOICE, AN ATTITUDE.

> *The function of Inclusive Education is therefore to lead the education system to create values and models of intervention that lead the whole school community to appropriate instruments (e.g. interaction, participation, communication, symbolic,) that allow everyone to participate and feel a sense of belonging to different communities in effective conditions of equity.*
> *(Rodrigues, 2018)*

1.2.A NEW EDUCATIONAL PARADIGM

According to the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights

> *(...) Inclusive Education requires a change of mentality at the societal level, moving from seeing certain children as a problem to identifying existing needs and improving the education systems themselves. It is crucial that society at large, decision-makers and all actors involved in the field of education fully understand the need for this paradigm shift. (European Council Commissioner for Human Rights, 2017, p. 20-21).*

The transition to effective Inclusive Education undoubtedly requires a change at the policy level. It is important to stress that the rights of all learners must be ensured, not only through education, but also within education. To this end, it is crucial to define a single framework at the level of Inclusive Education.

A MORE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION SYSTEM REQUIRES:

- 👍 Policies at the level of teacher training

- 👍 Policies on organisational, human and material resources in order to educate all students competently

- 👍 New curricular perspectives that give new meanings to teaching and learning. Policy practices which focus on the participation of all learners and the success of all learners.

Changes at legislative and policy level are fundamental to the promotion of Inclusive Education, however, we cannot neglect that this change also requires a change in language, especially with regard to students with disabilities. We must abandon medical/technical terms that may contribute to the exclusion of these students.

> *Raising awareness of all stakeholders about the benefits of Inclusive Education is also a step towards ensuring commitment and successful implementation Inclusive Education.*

THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL

Making the concept of Inclusive Education more inclusive is a challenge that implies an effort on the part of schools to combat differences, as well as overcoming barriers to learning on their part.

A quality Inclusive Education for All requires a more inclusive school organisation, curriculum, implementation of assessment processes, pedagogy and support.

We know that this change is really a challenge for everyone, but another challenge is to 'respect the rights and meet the needs of some learners', such as learners with specific educational needs that require additional support (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2021).

It is therefore essential that schools and the community are given greater flexibility to take account of intersectionality, i.e. the link between various factors that can underlie discrimination against individuals, such as: 'gender, distance, wealth, disability, ethnicity, language, migration, displacement, incarceration, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, religion and other beliefs and attitudes' (UNESCO, 2020, p. 4).

Schools must force themselves to change school structures and processes, rather than focusing on pupils' difficulties.

Teachers should have a range of strategies to use flexibly, so that pupils do not need to experience difficulties or failures before they can access support. Students with more complex support needs may require additional resources and specialist input. However, the most important form of support can be provided from resources that are available to all schools - that is, learners supporting learners, teachers supporting teachers, parents as partners in their children's education and communities as supporters of schools and other learning centres (UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2016 cited in European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2021).

Structures and processes to facilitate co-operation between schools, parents and community members are essential to support inclusive school development and enhance learners' progress. Schools can act as a resource for communities, providing services or becoming a base for other stakeholders. In addition to the family, co-operation with the local community helps schools to enrich learning experiences and outcomes, and further supports young people in developing the skills they need.

THE ROLE OF FAMILIES

Family involvement in the education process is crucial. However, as UNESCO (2017) notes, parents may not have enough trust and it may require an effort to develop their capacity and build networks. This happens due to variables such as the value that families give to schooling, the (lack of) trust they have in the institution School and/or the hyper-protection they have with their learners, which ends up creating noise, hindering or delaying the inclusion process.

The UNESCO International Bureau of Education underlines some key points to be taken into consideration when working with families:

- Families and communities have the right to be involved and can contribute in various ways. In particular, they know their children, unlike professionals.

- Developing family and community involvement is a gradual, trust-based process. Exceptional efforts are needed to promote the involvement of marginalised groups.

- Families and community groups can sometimes take the lead as activists for Inclusive Education.

- Families' rights to be involved can be integrated into legislation or the school governance system.

- Communities can also be effectively involved in the governance of schools or the wider education system.

THE ROLE OF SPECIALISED SERVICES

Parents are too often forced to choose between ensuring that their child's needs are met (which sometimes means placing them in special schools) or ensuring that they have the same rights and opportunities as other children (which, according to the Salamanca Statement, means placing children in mainstream schools). The aim should be to create a system where these choices are no longer necessary.

During the transition period, specialised services (speech therapy, occupational therapy, psychology, among others) can play an important role by becoming resource centres to support mainstream schools (UNESCO, 2017).

Specialised services should:

- Develop their capacity to meet the varied needs of learners.

- Develop the skills of local leaders and school headmasters, as well as teachers, to strengthen collaboration with other professionals to ensure high quality support for all learners.

PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

The European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education carried out a survey among member states in order to assess their priorities for action.

The following aspects were highlighted as gaps to be addressed:

- Monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of policies for Inclusive Education.

- Development of cross-sectoral collaborative working strategies (including monitoring and evaluation) across all levels and sectors.

- Development of multi-level/stakeholder quality assurance and accountability frameworks for Inclusive Education.

- Ensuring effective translation of national policies to regional, local and school levels.

- Development of cultures and competences for Inclusive Education across professions, system levels and sectors.

1.3. EUROPEAN GUIDELINES

Education is a right of every individual. This is enshrined in the **UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS**, article 26:

1. Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary stages of basic education. Elementary education is compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available; access to higher education shall be open to all on the basis of merit.

2. Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and racial or religious groups, as well as the development of the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

3. Parents have the priority right to choose the kind of education they wish for their children (United Nations, 1948).

The **DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD** (1989), also focused attention on Education in Article 28, stressing that:

States Parties recognize the right of the child to education and with a view to achieving this right progressively on the basis of equal opportunity:

a. Make primary education compulsory and free for all.

b. Encourage the organization of different systems of secondary, general and vocational education, make them public and accessible to all children and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and the provision of financial assistance in case of need.

c. They make higher education accessible to all, according to each one's abilities, by all appropriate means (United Nations, 1989).

This Diploma introduced an important concept, 'the best interests of the child'. This is important when considering the development of Inclusive Education:

"All decisions concerning children, adopted by public or private social protection institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, shall take into account primarily the best interests of the child."   (United Nations Organization, 1989).

1948
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UDHR
Universal
Declaration of
Human Rights

1989
-
DRC
Declaration
on the Rights
of the Child
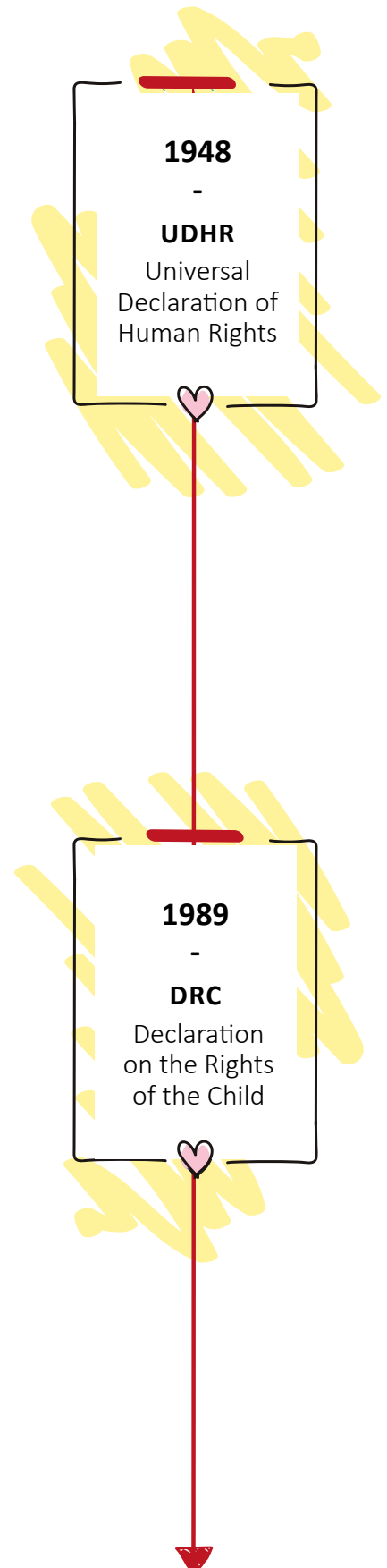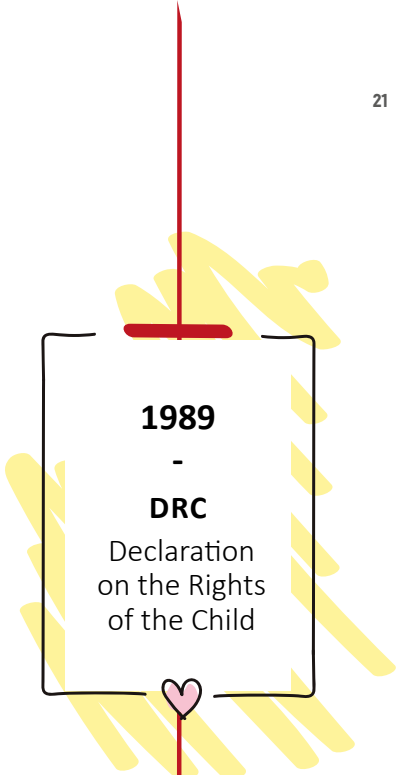
Therefore, when we are faced with some situation of assessment, curriculum, support to a student, we must always have in mind his/her interest.

In 1990, the initiative "Education for all", presented 6 goals to be achieved by 2015. Some of which were **aimed specifically at a particular group of students:**
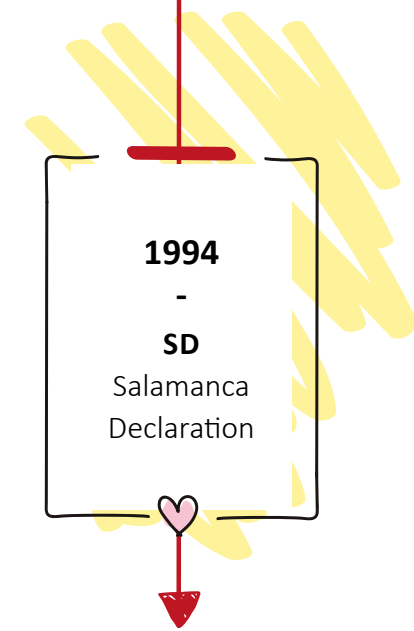
a. Expand and improve comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

b. Ensure that by 2015, all children, especially girls, those in difficult circumstances and those from ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality.

c. Ensure that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programes.

d. Achieve a 50% improvement in adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equal access to basic and continuing education for all adults.

e. Eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieve gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and success in good quality basic education.

f. Improve all aspects of the quality of education and ensure excellence for all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills. (World Education Forum 2000, cit in UNESCO, 2022).

In 1994, representatives from 96 Governments and 25 International Organisations formed the **World Conference on Special Needs Education in Salamanca**. The aim was to develop the objectives addressed in the "Education for All" initiative, where this time, the focus would be on Special Education and the need for the presence and participation of students with specific educational needs in mainstream schools:

a. Every child has a fundamental right to education and should have the opportunity to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning.

b. Each child has characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs that are unique to him or her.

1989
-
DRC
Declaration on the Rights of the Child

1994
-
SD
Salamanca Declaration

c. Education systems should be planned and educational program-mes implemented with the wide diversity of these characteristics and needs in mind.

d. Children and young people with special educational needs should have access to mainstream schools, which should be adapted to them through a child-centred pedagogy capable of meeting these needs.

e. Regular schools, following this inclusive orientation, are the means to fight discriminatory attitudes, creating open and caring communities, building an inclusive society and achieving educa-tion for all; furthermore, they provide an adequate education for the majority of children and promote the cost-efficiency of the whole education system (UNESCO, 1994).

The **DECLARATION OF SALAMANCA**, a binding document resul-ting from that Conference, was considered a crucial step towards the development of Inclusive Education.

Finally, another Diploma of international scope, concluded in 2006 and in force internationally since 2008, **THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**, should be highlighted. In the principles of the convention, the "respect for the developmental capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of chil-dren with disabilities to preserve their identities" is highlighted.

In Article 7 of the Convention, entirely devoted to **"Children with disabilities"** it is stressed that:

a. "States Parties shall take all necessary measures to ensure to chil-dren with disabilities the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with other children." (Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2008).

b. "In all actions concerning children with disabilities, the best inte-rests of the child shall have primary consideration." (Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2008.

c. "States Parties shall ensure to children with disabilities the right to express their views freely in all matters affecting them, their views being given due consideration in accordance with their age and maturity, on an equal basis with other children, and to receive assistance appropriate to their disability and age for the exercise of this right." (Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabili-ties, 2008.

2006
-
CRPD
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

In Article 8 (**Awareness**) it warns of the need to "promote, at all levels of the education system, including in all children from an early age, an attitude of respect for the rights of persons with disabilities."

Also in Article 24 (**Education**), it is reiterated that:

a. Persons with disabilities are not excluded from mainstream education on the basis of disability and that children with disabilities are not excluded from free and compulsory primary or secondary education on the basis of disability.

b. Persons with disabilities are able to access inclusive, quality and free primary and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live.

c. Reasonable accommodation is provided according to individual needs.

d. Persons with disabilities are provided with the necessary support within the general education system to facilitate their effective education.

e. Effective individualised support measures are provided in environments that maximise academic and social development, consistent with the goal of full inclusion. **"The assurance that the education of persons, and in particular children, who are blind, deaf or deafblind, is provided in the languages, mode and means of communication most appropriate to the individual and in environments conducive to academic and social development."** (Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2008).

Finally, in Article 30 of this Convention (**Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport**), that which is fundamental for effective Inclusion in the school context is safeguarded:

f. **"Ensure that children with disabilities have, on an equal basis with other children, to participate in play, recreation, sports and leisure activities, including those within the school system."** (Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2008).

The struggle for education and the implementation of inclusive education systems continued, first with the 8 Millennium Development Goals (2000) and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (2015).

2006

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CRPD
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

1.4. THE IMPORTANCE OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

As we see, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) is clear in its 26th article, when it establishes Education as a right across all subjects: "Everyone has the right to education (...)". Besides this mention, it is also referred to in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1959) "The child has the right to education (...)". Nevertheless, in the same Diploma it is specifically referred to the Right of the child "mentally and physically handicapped or suffering from some social impairment, shall benefit from special treatment, education and care required by his particular condition." However, why do we talk about Inclusive Education, when the Right to Education is enshrined in international documents of utmost importance and undisputable? The answer lies in the fact that, still all over the world, there are children who do not enjoy the school space, for a variety of reasons. For this reason, the educational systems speak of the importance of an Inclusive Education where, according to UNESCO,

"All children matter and they really matter.
(UNESCO, 2017).

When we address the issue of the importance of Inclusive Education, we can perspective it considering two aspects: ensuring Education for All and, on the other hand, the transmission of values that respect the values of tolerance and inclusion of diversity. Well, considering the first perspective, Inclusive Education assumes an essential role, because it aims to ensure that All have access to an education, not only of quality, but also equal (UNESCO, 2019), through the creation, by the education system, of values and models of intervention that allow "participation and a sense of belonging to different communities in effective conditions of equality for all". (Rodrigues, 2018). On the other hand, we must emphasize that

Inclusive Education is a tool that contributes to the creation of communities
built according to the values of tolerance and Inclusion
(UNESCO, 2019).

When we address the issue of Inclusive Education, we cannot neglect that it is also a response to students with disabilities. This assumes a crucial role, as it prevents not only isolation, but also social exclusion, allowing them greater independence, not only from the point of view of Education, but also throughout their lives (UNESCO, 2019). Also on this point, note that the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights thematic study on the Right of Persons with Disabilities to Education revealed that Inclusive Education contributes to quality education (UNESCO, 2019).

1.4.1. HOW TO ACHIEVE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION?

Achieving Inclusive Education is perhaps the biggest and most challenging goal of the current educational systems. According to Rodrigues (2018), there is a set of resistances that hinder the inclusive reform of education: "The instability that the frequency of students with difficulties causes in a system that (...) should be coherent and predictable"; "The fact that there are educational spaces of greater inclusion coexisting with spaces of exclusion and the preparation of schools to develop inclusive practices". Now, in this circumstance it is essential to ask how can we achieve an Inclusive Education System? The answer lies firstly in the promotion of and respect for those values that are the values of an Inclusive Education which involves creating the necessary conditions of access, participation (aimed at a sense of belonging) and, finally, success.

According to the International Office of Education -UNESCO (2016, p. 13), we must consider four keys aspects when we practice Inclusion:

1. **Inclusion is a process,** perceived as a path, whose goal is to find the best responses to the diversity present in schools. It is a long, never-ending path, where learning to live with difference and learning from difference triggers positive experiences, in the sense that these are seen as a stimulus to encourage learning.

2. **The identification and removal of barriers is a concern of Inclusion.** When we talk about barriers we are considering different barriers, which present themselves in different ways, which in turn, hinder the inclusion process. The relevance of this step leads to its development later in this Handbook.

3. **It is inevitable to talk about inclusion without mentioning the presence, participation and success of all learners.** These concepts are deeply connected. Presence" refers to the space where children's learning takes place and to their regular attendance. When talking about presence, the idea of creating the necessary conditions of access is implicit (Rodrigues, 2018). On the other hand, "participation" (focused on the sense of belonging), is related to the experiences had by the student him/herself in the school/classroom context, where his/her opinions are considered. Finally, "success", which is related to the learning outcomes achieved through adaptations of the curriculum.

4. **Inclusion is a process aimed at a group of learners who, for whatever reason, are at risk of exclusion, marginalisation and/or underachievement.** To this end, it is essential to implement measures adjusted to the needs of each one of them, so that their presence, participation and success are ensured within the educational system.

In the previous paragraphs we have addressed the four key aspects that guide us towards achieving Inclusive Education. In fact, it is also important to highlight the very important role of the International Diplomas mentioned earlier in this manual, which together with the values and pillars mentioned earlier, drive educational systems to change this paradigm.

1.5. BARRIERS AND FACILITATING FACTORS

The Salamanca Statement (1994) drew the attention of the international community to the inclusion of children with special educational needs in mainstream classrooms. It recognises the importance of a child--centred pedagogy as a principle for recognising and responding to the educational needs of each student, thus ensuring a quality education that provides learning, participation and success through the use of all necessary strategies.

According to UNESCO (2021), "people with disabilities are two and a half times more likely than their peers never to have attended school", i.e. millions of children/young people are missing out on the opportunity to take their place at school.

Despite the existence of international standards, it is undeniable the presence of obstacles that hinder the inclusion and learning process. For Booth and Ainscow (2002), the concept of "barriers to learning and participation" can be used to draw attention to what can be improved in order to provide quality learning for all children.

Barriers can take many forms and can be found at any time in the school, in the school setting, in communities and at the policy level. Furthermore, barriers to learning and participation may arise in the interaction between students, and students and teachers, namely in what they are taught and how they are taught (Booth Ainscow, 2002). According to the same authors, school architecture, cultures, policies, the curriculum, the teaching method, the place where students sit and the way they interact are some examples of barriers that may hinder the teaching and learning process, but let us look concretely at how these barriers may be present at school. **We can identify the following barriers:**

1

ATTITUDINAL BARRIERS

1. Peer pressure.

2. Teachers' attitudes.

3. A set of negative behaviours on the part of teachers, peers and the rest of the community that hinder the inclusion process.

2

SCHOOL SETTING

1. The distance to the school from the student's place of residence.

2. The inadequacy of school structure and architecture.

3. Lack of technology and support material.

4. The high number of students per class.

3

CURRICULUM

When the reality is Central and Eastern Europe, we encounter situations where children with disabilities have access to limited curricula, based on false ideas of what a child with disabilities is not able to learn.

(UNESCO 2020)

4

TEACHERS

1. Initial training of teachers with insufficient knowledge of IE.

2. Inadequate response to the diversity present in the classroom, making dificult the inclusion process.

3. Some agree with the old education system, opposing change.

5   **FAMILY**

Families are not always a facilitating factor in the inclusion process due to:

1. To, the absence of knowledge and information about the possibility and duty of participation during the student's learning and inclusion process.

2. To the non-acceptance by families of the student's difficulty.

1. Use of the term "Special Educational Needs".

According to Booth Ainscow, (2002) the use of the expression "Special Educational Needs" constitutes a barrier to the learning and participation process, hindering the development of inclusive practices. Although the use of this expression is still an integral practice in the culture of some schools, the truth is that it is still present in some situations. Let us look at the following situations where "Special Educational Needs" is present: in the preparation of reports, in the identification of pupil difficulties and even "in the information that schools have to provide regarding expenditure on "Special Educational Needs" (Booth Ainscow, 2002).

2. ATTITUDINAL BARRIERS.
These are understood as a set of negative behaviours on the part of teachers, peers and the rest of the community that hinder the inclusion process. Among others, we can highlight:

a) Peer pressure
Peer acceptance is a challenge for inclusion, namely when we talk about the inclusion of children with disabilities. There is a consensus in the scientific community that children who are not accepted by their peers are more likely to face risk situations during their lives (Dua & Dua, 2017 cited in. Ochoa & Olivarcz Jr., 1995).

b) Teachers' attitudes
There are several studies that mention the attitude and beliefs of mainstream teachers as one of the barriers to the learning process and inclusion of students with disabilities. They conclude that the following attitudes of teachers affect their commitment and behaviour in implementing Inclusive Education: considering the teaching and learning process of children with disabilities the responsibility of Special Education teachers; viewing the presence of the student with disabilities in the classroom as a disturbance causing distraction to the other students in the class (Dua & Dua, 2017 cit in, Kattumuri 2013).

3. BARRIERS IN THE SCHOOL SETTING

The United Nations Children's Fund highlighted in 2019 that at least "75% of the 5.1 million children with disabilities are excluded from quality Inclusive Education in the regions of Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia." (UNICEF, cited in UN 2019). It highlights that thousands of children attend 'special' schools, segregated from their peers. Nevertheless, there are a number of barriers, linked to the school itself, that hinder the inclusion process, mainly:

a. The distance to the school from the student's place of residence
Sometimes, the lack of adequate transport, aggravates this situation further, hindering the access and inclusion of the student. (Dua & Dua, 2017).

b. The inadequacy of school structure and architecture
Schools must be designed to welcome Everyone. In this sense, it is of the utmost importance to think about disabled children and their mobility. School buildings can be a barrier if, for example, facilities such as toilets, library, doors, passages, etc, are not sufficiently developed to receive these children.

c. Lack of technology and support material

UNICEF acknowledges the lack of technologies to support inclusion, namely "special readers and tablets and lightweight wheelchairs that help children with disabilities gain more independence and therefore attend school" (UNICEF, 2019). It also highlights that the exact proportion of children with access to these technologies and materials is unknown, but reveals that there is a higher proportion in underdeveloped countries.

The use of these assistive technologies, as well as pedagogical materials that facilitate learning acquisition and participation, are fundamental to the inclusion process of children with disabilities.

d. The high number of students per class

Is a challenge to respond to the diversity present in the classrooms. This situation hinders the learning and participation of disabled children. Thus, there is difficulty both for students in adjusting to the classroom reality and for teachers who, due to the number of students, cannot respond in a positive way to their specific needs, thus hindering their learning process, participation and inclusion.

4. THE CURRICULUM

The traditional curriculum is a barrier to the development of Inclusive Education Systems. Inclusive Education is based on the assumption that a curriculum is able to respond to the potential and needs of each learner. Therefore, it is a means to promote the quality of learning.

When the reality is Central and Eastern Europe, we encounter situations where children with disabilities have access to limited curricula, based on false ideas of what a child with disabilities is not able to learn (UNESCO 2020, cited in. Baglieri & Shapiro, 2017).

Article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities highlights that traditional views of learning for children with disabilities, as well as assessment systems, which aim to evaluate academic success are a barrier to the implementation of Inclusive Education.

5. TEACHER TRAINING

Teachers are one of the most important resources in the inclusion process. Insufficient knowledge about Inclusive Education acquired during initial teacher training is an obstacle to the process of educational inclusion. "The most common approach to teacher education for inclusion is to introduce Inclusive Education in initial teacher education in individual units of study infusing the existing content with concepts and knowledge often disconnected from a conceptual framework of Inclusive Education." (UNESCO, 2020). This reality, can lead to an inadequate response to the diversity present in the classroom, thus hindering the inclusion process. However, teachers can also be hindered by agreeing to the old education system, opposing change through dialogue, and refusing to collaborate with other professionals. Nevertheless, the refusal to accept children with disabilities, for example, in the classroom, is also a barrier by the behaviour of teachers (UNESCO, 2020).

6. LACK OF INFORMATION ON THE PART OF FAMILIES.

The family is a fundamental part in the development of the child and should assume a role of partnership with the school (Oliveira et al., 2015, cited in Costabile., 2005). However, families are not always a facilitating factor in the inclusion process due to:

  a. To, the absence of knowledge and information about the possibility and duty of participation during the student's learning and inclusion process.

  b. To the non-acceptance by families of the student's difficulty (Oliveira et al., 2015, cit. in Costabile., 2005).
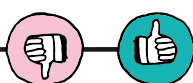
Faced with so many barriers, we should think about facilitators for the inclusion of students with specific educational needs, which immediately involves minimising the barriers mentioned above, through the mobilisation of a set of resources, not only material, but also human, political, among others.

1 — PRESENÇA E PARTICIPAÇÃO

Um Sistema Educativo Inclusivo exige uma reforma de todo o ambiente educacional. As lideranças de todas as entidades educacionais são fundamentais para introduzir, não só a cultura, mas também as políticas e as práticas para atingir uma Educação Inclusiva

2 — A DIVERSIDADE COMO BENEFÍCIO

Reconhecer a diversidade como um benefício é "aprender a conviver e a aprender com a diferença."

3 — AVALIAR AS BARREIRAS

Identificar, bem como avaliar as barreiras existentes ao acesso à educação, participação e realização.

Reforma de todo o ambiente educacional.

4 — REDUZIR DESIGUALDADES

Desenvolver capacidades do professor e do sistema, e encorajar ambientes de apoio à aprendizagem, que contribuirão para melhorias globais na qualidade da educação."

5 — PARCERIAS

Envolver a escola com parceiros-chave da comunidade para promover as condições para uma aprendizagem inclusiva.

Firstly, we must be aware of the importance of including the values of Equity and Inclusion in the Education System, because without them, it is difficult to achieve an Inclusive Education for All. Thus, and according to UNESCO (2019), we must consider the following aspects:

a. Valuing the presence, participation and achievement of all students, regardless of their contexts and personal characteristics.

b. Recognize diversity as a benefit of "learning to live together and learn from difference".

c. Identify as well as assess existing barriers to educational access, participation and achievement.

d. "Build common understanding that more inclusive and equitable education systems have the potential to promote gender equality, reduce inequalities, build teacher and system capacity, and encourage supportive learning environments, which will contribute to overall improvements in the quality of education." (UNESCO, 2019).

e. "Engage the education sector and key community partners to promote the conditions for inclusive learning and a broader understanding of the principles of inclusion and equity." (UNESCO, 2019).

On the other hand, also mention that Education Policy influences and supports, not only ideas, but also inclusive practices, establishing the equal right of everyone to access quality and equitable education (UNESCO, 2019, cit in. UNESCO, 2015).

IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO LABEL TO INTERVENE

This is an idea well present in the documents issued by UNESCO when addressing the issue of Inclusive Education. The use of the expression "Special Educational Needs" constitutes, as we had the opportunity to explore, a barrier to the development of an Inclusive Education System. In this sense, the expression mentioned should be replaced by "educational difficulties" (Booth; Ainscow, 2002).

In addition to the mentioned, we should consider the following points as factors that facilitate the development of an Inclusive Education:

a. An Inclusive Education System requires a reform of the whole educational environment. The leaders of all educational entities are key to introduce, not only the culture, but also the policies and practices to achieve an Inclusive Education.

b. The recognition that Everyone has the ability to learn must be present, including those with disabilities. This can be achieved through a flexible curriculum, the use of appropriate teaching and learning methods. Furthermore, to mention the importance of Early Intervention (so that those who benefit from this response can develop their potential), as well as personalised educational responses according to the needs and goals of each student.

c. The acquisition of knowledge about the Inclusive Education approach by teachers and non-teaching staff are essential for the implementation of inclusive learning environments.

d. Fostering environments where everyone feels supported, safe and where they feel able to participate are important for building an inclusive school community.

## 1.5.2 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: IMPOSITION OR A SCHOOL CULTURE?

Education is, as we have already had the opportunity to observe, a right that applies to all human beings and is enshrined in international texts (Convention on Human Rights, 1948; Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1984). However, for decades the school has not responded to the educational needs of disabled children, excluding them from the regular education system. Faced with this scenario, children had to rely on Special Schools. In other words, there was no concern on the part of the educational systems to include disabled children. However, the Salamanca Statement inspired governments to make legal and regulatory changes which governed the education of students segregated from mainstream education. In this event, it became clear the need for a paradigm shift in mainstream schools, suggesting the creation of schools able to receive children, regardless of their personal characteristics (UNESCO, 1994).

Despite the need for regulations for the development of inclusive education, it is important that the school community has openness and creativity, as well as resources to support the application of inclusive learning strategies and methods. The implementation of an Inclusive Education System is not possible without an inclusive school culture.
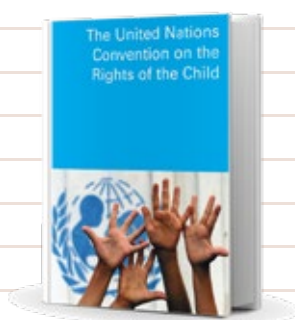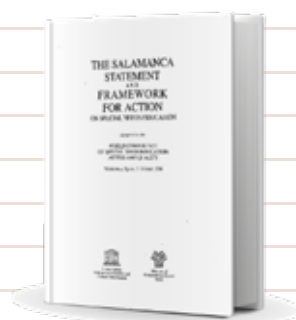
ADITTIONAL RESOURCES

LEGAL RESOURCES
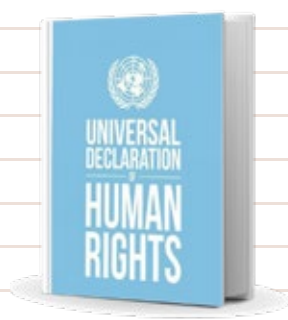
Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Convention on the Rights of the Child

Salamanca Declaration

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

VÍDEOS

+Inclusive Education: From Reflection to action! - Taking into account the 4th SDG (Sustainable Development Goal) - "Ensure access to inclusive, quality and equitable education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all." - EDUPA, a Portuguese organization, together with AGIFODENT, a Spanish organisation, launch here, in the context of the Erasmus +Inclusive Education Project, a set of six videos aiming to end stigma, inform, clarify and educate for a society where each and every one counts!

The strength of diversity - What would the world be like if we were all the same? In this video, diversity is sought as an advantage in educating everyone. If we are all different, why do we learn in the same way?

The video addresses disability and incapacity, seeking to define, demystify, and convey the message that all students have the potential to learn, even while living with physical, intellectual, or sensory disabilities. School is for everyone, with respect and response to all differences. Difference is synonymous with diversity and richness.
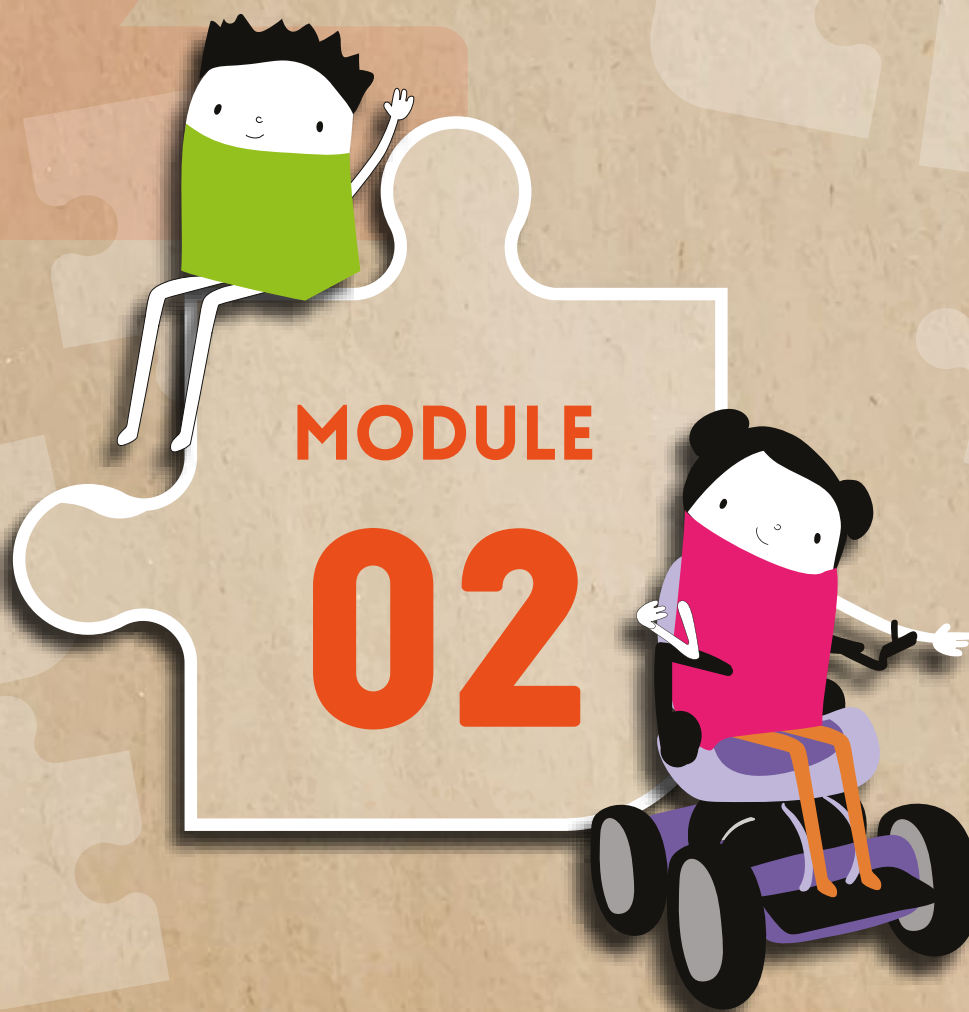
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STUDENTS WITH
DISABILITIES OR IMPAIRMENT[S]?

MODULE
02

MODULE 2

2.1 WHAT IS DISABILITY? WHAT ABOUT INCAPABILITY?

Considering what the ICF (International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health) states:

"Disability is a generic term ("hat") for impairments, activity limitations and participation restrictions. It indicates the negative aspects of the interaction between an individual (with a health condition) and his or her contextual (environmental and personal) factors".
(ICF, 2004).

Therefore, the term "disability" takes on a more complex and comprehensive aspect, referring not only to issues of dysfunctionalities of the body, but also to the restrictions and participation that these imply. It is a restriction or lack of capacity. This may be temporary or permanent. It results from a disability (Encarnação et al. 2015).

On the other hand, disability is defined as "a loss or abnormality of a body structure or physiological function (including mental functions)." (ICF, 2004). This definition meets the description in Article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, by defining a person with a disability as "those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers are prevented from participating fully and effectively in society on an equal basis with others" (Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2008, p. 3).

In short, "We define impairment as the lack of part or all of a limb, or the defect of a limb, organ or mechanism of the body, and disability as the disadvantage or restriction of activity caused by contemporary social organisation."
(Pinto, 2015, cit in UPIAS, 1976, p. 14).

2.1.1 PERSON WITH DISABILITY OR HANDICAPPED PERSON?

The issue of inclusion generates various discussions and one of these is precisely related to the correct use of terminology. Thus, one of the issues to be discussed is how to approach the subject with a disability, that is, should we use the expression "Person with Special Educational Needs", "Person with Disabilities" or "Person with Disabilities"?

Clarifying:

PNE **Person with Special Needs**	PPD **Person with disability**	PCD **Person with Disability**
Although widely used, this is considered the most offensive term when denoting people who have some kind of disability, this is because by stating that someone has a special need, there is a disqualification of the skills developed by this person, passing the idea of inefficiency, when in fact most people with disabilities develop their tasks as effectively as any other individual.	In this case, the big mistake in using this term is in the idea that the disability is something that the individual carries. Having a disability is not something indispensable. therefore. There for, i tis a wrong way to denominate it.	According to the United Nations Convention on the Right of Persons with Disabilities, this is the correct denomination, because it does not impose any type of discrimination, prejudice or denominational barriers, which convey a negative or inferiorized image of these individuals in society.

The truth is that there is no consensus on this point. However, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities assumes the Person-First Language (PFL)", giving primacy to the person, putting diagnosis in second place. It is important to mention here that each subject has their own preference in how they are characterised, so the best practice is to ask and respect each person's choices.
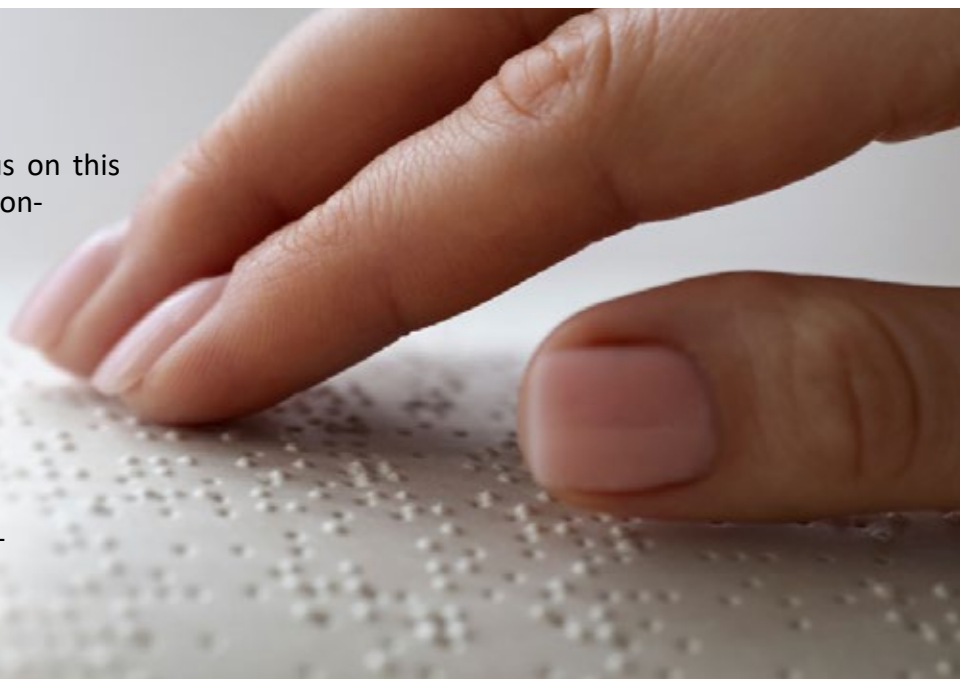
Below, we present **several incorrect expressions** followed by comments and the equivalent **correct terms, correct sentences and correct spellings**, with the purpose of supporting professionals from several areas, who need to speak and write about issues of people with disabilities in their daily lives. According to the social inclusion consultant, Romeu Kazumi Sassaki (2011):

INCORRECT EXPRESSIONS:

"Normal teenager"

"Cripple; disabled; invalid"

'Although he is disabled, he is a great student'.

Wishing to refer to an adolescent (a child or an adult) who does not have a disability, many people use the expressions "normal adolescent", "normal child" and "normal adult".

Normality, in relation to people, is a questionable and outdated concept.

The word "invalid" means "worthless". This is how people with disabilities were considered from ancient times until the end of the Second World War. These terms were often used until the 1980s. From 1981, under the influence of the International Year of Disabled People, the expression "disabled person" began to be written and spoken for the first time.

Gradually, the expression "disabled person" came into use, often shortened to "people with disabilities". Around the middle of the 1990s, the CORRECT TERM people with disabilities came into use, which remains in use to this day.

In the above sentence there is a bias:

'The disabled person cannot be a great student'.

non-disabled adolescent [or child or adult].
non-disabled adolescent [or child or adult].

Person with disabilitie

'He has a disability and is a great student'.

CORRECT TERMS:

INCORRECT EXPRESSIONS:

> " Exceptional child "

> " Mild, moderate, severe, profound mental disability "

> " Mongoloid; Mongolian "

"Exceptional" was the term used in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s to refer to people with intellectual disabilities. With the emergence of educational studies and practices in the 1980s and 1990s regarding high abilities or extraordinary talents, the term "exceptionals" came to refer both to people with above-average multiple intelligences (gifted people or people with high abilities and geniuses) and to people with below-average logical-mathematical intelligence (people with intellectual disabilities) - hence the terms "positive exceptionals" and "negative exceptionals" respectively, both of which are rarely used.

Since the Montreal Declaration on Intellectual Disability, approved on 6/10/04 by the World Health Organization (WHO, 2004), together with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the term "mental disability" has become "intellectual disability". Earlier, in 1992, the then American Association on Mental Disability (AAMR) adopted a new conceptualization of intellectual disability (until then called "intellectual disability"), considering it no longer as an absolute trait of the person who has it but as an attribute that interacts with its physical and human environment.

The words "mongoloid" and "mongoloid" reflect the racial prejudice of the 19th century scientific community. In 1959, the French discovered that Down syndrome was a genetic accident. The term "Down" comes from John Langdon Down, named after the English doctor who identified the syndrome in 1866.

> Child with intellectual disability.

> Intellectual disability
>
> (without specifying level of impairment).

> Person with Down syndrome.
>
> Child with Down syndrome.
>
> A Down child.
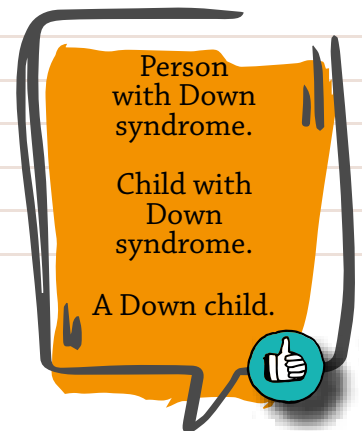
CORRECT TERMS:

2.2 WAYS OF THINKING ABOUT DISABILITY

Dealing with disability is to touch on a term which is not only complex but also controversial. Over the years, several theorists have reflected on and discussed this issue, thus resulting in the development of three ways of thinking about disability: the Charity Model, the Medical Model and the Social Model (UNICEF, 2014; Pinto, 2015).

CHARITY OR DISPENSATIONAL MODEL

It is considered the first approach that attempts to explain the origins of disability and is therefore the oldest and most outdated. According to this model the origins of disability are explained by religious reasons and therefore perceived as a divine punishment. People with disabilities are seen as diabolical and consequently considered dispensable to society, being placed in spaces suitable for "abnormals" (expression used at the time) (Palacios & Bariffi, 2007).

According to Palacios & Bariffi (2007), two sub-models can be found in this approach:

Eugenic Submodel:

Developed in classical antiquity, where disability was seen, according to religious and political conventions, as something evil and therefore they considered the development and growth of children with disabilities inconvenient. Given this idea, society resorted to infanticide.

Marginalization sub-model:

The main characteristic of this sub-model is the exclusion of the person with disability, either as a consequence of the undervaluation of the subject, or due to the fear of curses coming from the person with disability.

Contrary to the submodel discussed above, infanticide was not committed. Charity and begging were the means of subsistence for these individuals.

MEDICAL MODEL

This is a more traditional and still widely used approach to analysing and explaining disability, based on medical conceptions (Pinto 2015, cited in Barnes, Oliver, and Barton, 2002). It is, therefore, a model where disability is seen as a consequence of a disease which requires medical intervention

"views disability as a problem of the person, directly caused by disease, trauma or other health condition, which requires medical care provided in the form of individual treatment by professionals." *(Alves, et al. 2012).*

This perspective focuses on the issue of the subject's "deficit", conceiving disability as the absence of some biological functionality. Thus, this is seen as a medical problem, where the person is seen as a helpless, vulnerable and dependent upon others.

To be highlighted that this model does not consider the difficulties faced by people with disabilities, namely the barriers for participation and for performing daily activities (architectural, attitudinal, etc.,). It should also be noted that this approach based on this model is still widely used in educational settings, where the learning difficulties presented by students are explained by problems internal to them (Alves, et al. 2012).

SOCIAL MODEL

The medical approach to disability was rejected and, subsequently, a new view on disability emerged, known as the "social model". It denies the conceptions advocated by the conventional "medical model", setting aside the focus on the disabilities of the subject, highlighting for the first time the distinction between disability and impairment "Disability (impairment) is something imposed on our impairments by the way we are unnecessarily isolated and excluded from full participation in society." (Pinto, 2015, cit in, UPIAS, 1976, p. 14).

With the redefinition of the concept of "disability", seen as a "form of social oppression ", the development of the "social model" led, quickly, to a change of paradigm, situating disability in society and not in the limitations of the subject, i.e. the difficulties associated with people with disabilities were not related to their biological characteristics, but rather to the lack of responses to their needs and characteristics by society.

When we talk about the issue of inclusion in educational settings, it becomes useful to resort to this Model, as it allows understanding the students' difficulties taking into account the environmental barriers present to their inclusion, such as the curriculum and assessment (Alves, et al, 2012). In this sense, let us take the following situation as an example:

PRACTIL CASE

If a student has Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and shows difficulties during his/her learning process (difficulty at the level of attention and organisation, for example), considering the social model of disability, the focus would not be on trying to correct the "hyperactivity", but rather on the process of identifying and removing the barriers to his/her participation and inclusion. In this sense, teachers should adapt the educational context, as well as, enable tools, and appropriate teaching methods so that the student acquires the learning and achieves his/her success.

Thus, the social model underlying inclusive education is based on a change in the way disability is seen, with emphasis on context, barriers, prejudices, negative attitudes and exclusion from society of people who are different from them. The inclusive model does not deny that individual differences exist, as all people are unique and different; this model focuses on the fact that it is society which promotes exclusion, that disability is a social construct, and that inclusion is not a prize but a right.

2.3 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DIFFERENCE AND LABELLING

It is not from today that societies label, regardless of the area, in order to characterise those who step outside previously established standards of normalisation. Thus, labelling and categorisation have always been present in societies. It is a process that has in its genesis historical beliefs that end up influencing the way societies think and act, bringing repercussions at the level of policies, as well as at the level of behaviours. When we address the issue of labelling in education, it has been strongly used in the last century, based on the diagnosis of the student with specific educational needs. However, in the last 20 years this process has been subject to several criticisms (Hamre et al., cited in Boyle 2020).

Addressing the issue of labelling in Inclusive Education is complex due to the presence of several scientific contributions at this level. There is support within the scientific community that labelling based on diagnosis is necessary to allocate the resources required to meet the educational needs presented by learners. There are those who argue that categorising students provides a better intervention, thus contributing to better learning opportunities. Nevertheless, it is important to stress the idea that the continuous categorisation, as well as the use of diagnosis, emphasises the idea that this is the only way to access the educational support that children with difficulties need. Well, this can prove to be somewhat negative to the process of students' learning and inclusion (Boyle, 2020).

We know that the study of the use of labelling and categorisation processes in describing the behaviours and characteristics displayed by pupils with specific educational needs have been the subject of discussion (Elliot & Grigoreuko, 2014). When we address the topic of labelling processes, a question arises that is presented here for the purpose of reflection:
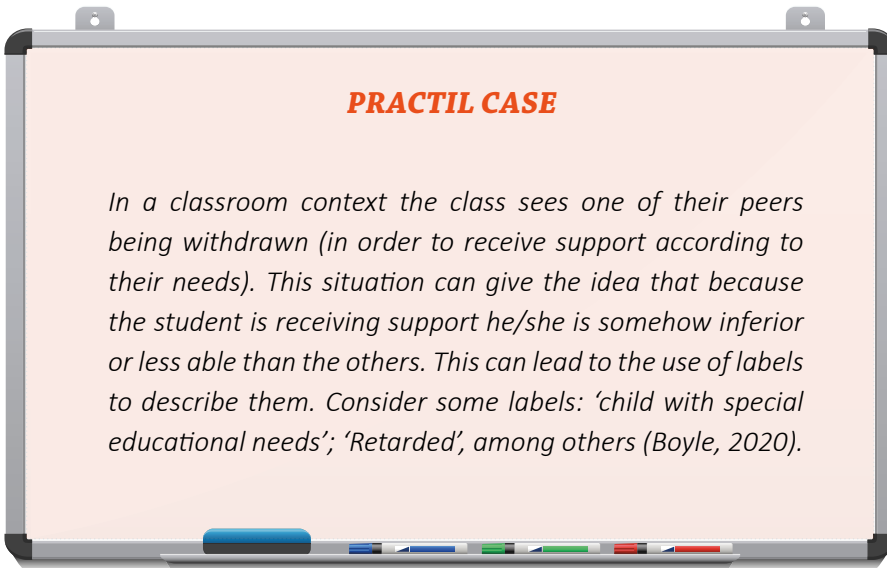

Is the use of labelling by educational professionals done because Educational Systems require it or for other motivations?
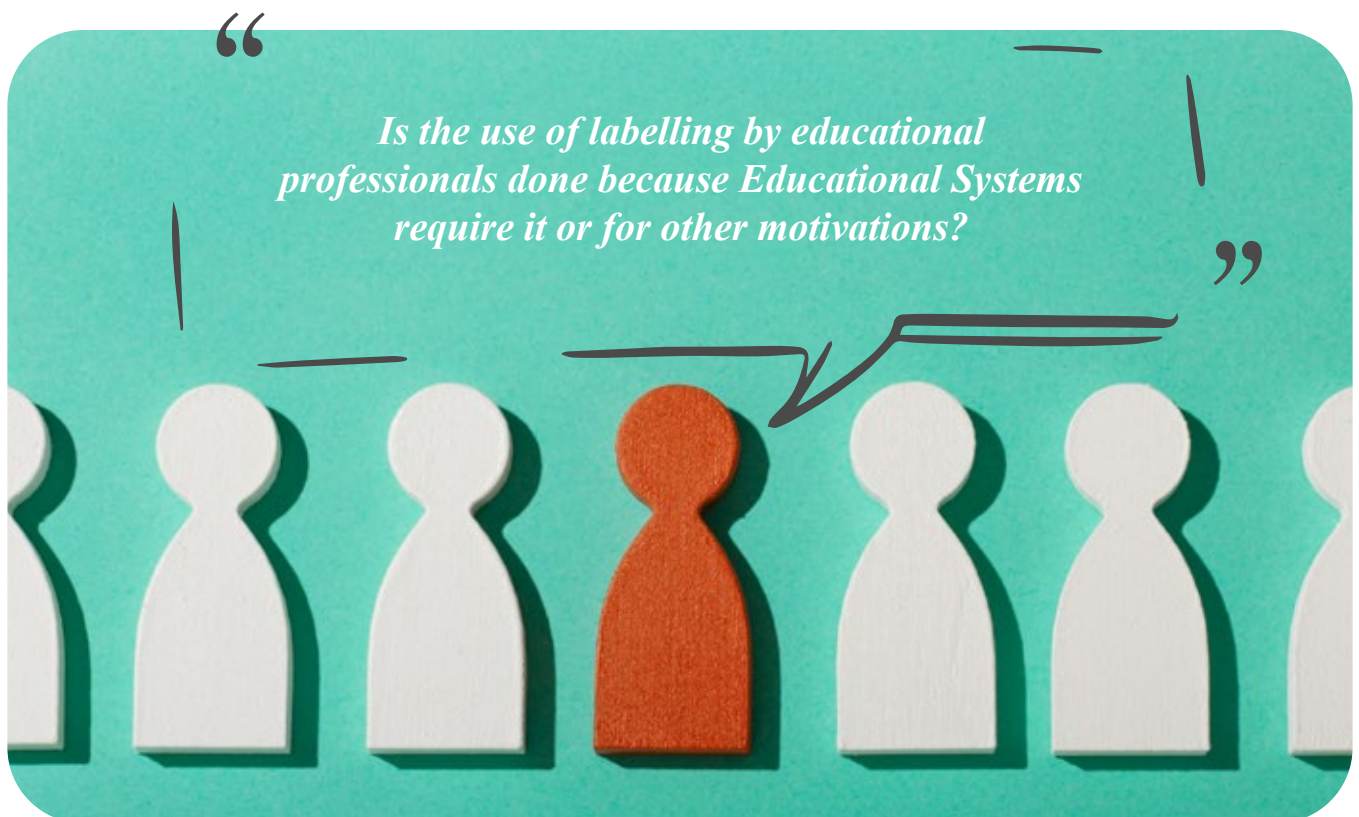
According to Boyle (2020), analysing the labelling and categorisation process is complex, however the following 3 questions need to be considered:

DO LABELS LEAD TO STEREOTYPING AS WELL AS STIGMATISATION?

According to Hardman et al. (1999), labels correspond to the process by which society creates descriptors to identify people who deviate significantly from the norm. The use of this type of behaviour can lead to the stigmatisation and stereotyping of the subject. According to Becker (1963), stereotyping is an attribution with a negative connotation of those who exhibit different behaviours (outside the norm). This procedure begins with the perception, as well as the emphasisation of socially unacceptable and undesirable characteristics presented by a subject (Sowards, 2015, cited in Boyle 2020).

Let us take the following situation as an example:

PRACTIL CASE

In a classroom context the class sees one of their peers being withdrawn (in order to receive support according to their needs). This situation can give the idea that because the student is receiving support he/she is somehow inferior or less able than the others. This can lead to the use of labels to describe them. Consider some labels: 'child with special educational needs'; 'Retarded', among others (Boyle, 2020).

The labels presented in the example considered above, may define the identity of the student, contributing to the estrangement from peers. On the other hand, and by feeling inferior to others, the labelled student does not feel motivated to approach and establish ties with their peers (Gogffman, 1963).

DOES THE USE OF LABELS GIVE COMFORT TO THE CHILDREN, AS WELL AS TO THEIR FAMILIES?

The use of labels is not always pejorative, often the labelling that comes from the diagnosis ends up explaining the "problem". This can relieve stress, as well as clearing up doubts about what was previously unknown (Gillman, Heyman and Swain, 2000, p. 397, quoted in Boyle, 2020). A study conducted by Riddick (2000), where he interviewed students with Communication and Language Disorder, namely dyslexia, concluded that students found their label useful. The truth, and considering the literature, labelling based on diagnosis does bring a sense of relief and comfort to parents and the child themselves. However, the use of these labels can trigger in the student a feeling of internal deficit, i.e., the child takes the blame for the difficulty he/she presents, instead of exploring other factors, namely environmental ones. (Boyle, 2020). Here, we can consider the influence teachers, the classroom environment, the parents themselves, as well as policies, have in mitigating the child's difficulties (Boxer, Challen and McCarthy, 1991, cit in Boyle, 2020).

According to Rees (2017), the use of the social model has led to a resistance in the use of labelling pupils with specific educational needs, contributing to a deficit understanding of the pupil. This stance, contributes to an individualised education with gaps. For this author, there is a positivity inherent in the process of categorisation, since it allows a greater knowledge about the difficulty presented by the child, as well as a better understanding of the child's real needs, leading to a better intervention and to the potentialisation of learning opportunities. On the other hand, and as mentioned here, although the labeling process based on a medical diagnosis can bring some peace of mind to parents, students and teachers, it may also lead to a decrease in expectations, for example of teachers themselves in relation to to students with specific educational needs.

However, and considering the arguments developed above, it is important to mention and warn that there is a set of legislation, including an international one, that defends and ensures the presence and participation of people with specific educational needs in the School.

The truth is that the need to categorise is related to the way educational organisations differentiate to meet the needs of children with difficulties "Great systems are not built to function any other way, so we should not be surprised that labelling in [inclusive] education is a key aspect of many government systems, which categorise need" (Boyle, 2020, cited in Boyle 2014, p. 214).

DOES THIS PROCESS LEAD TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDIVIDUALISED PLAN, WHICH IN TURN WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE STUDENT'S INCLUSION?

Inclusive teachers should take care to adapt teaching methods to the needs of students with difficulties. However, the use of categorisation can lead to placing students with the same label in the same category, without concern for matching teaching methods to the student's own needs and goals (Klibthoug & Agbeuyega, 2013, cited in Boyle, 2020).

We know that two students with the same diagnosis have different needs and learning objectives. For example, two students who are diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), require different accommodations and methods of teaching and learning.

By this to say that categorising the student based on diagnosis does not provide the necessary information to the teacher, thus hindering intervention
(Kelly & Norwich, 2004).

Despite the above, there are those who claim that the use of labels in educational systems leads students as well as teachers to focus on difficulties, leaving aside the student's strengths and abilities (Blum & Bakken, 2010).

Nevertheless, focusing exclusively on labels is not the way to develop quality inclusive education, as the use of labels leads to low self-esteem of the learner, contributing to lower expectations from teachers and the rest of the school community
(Boyle, 2014, cited in Boyle, 2020).
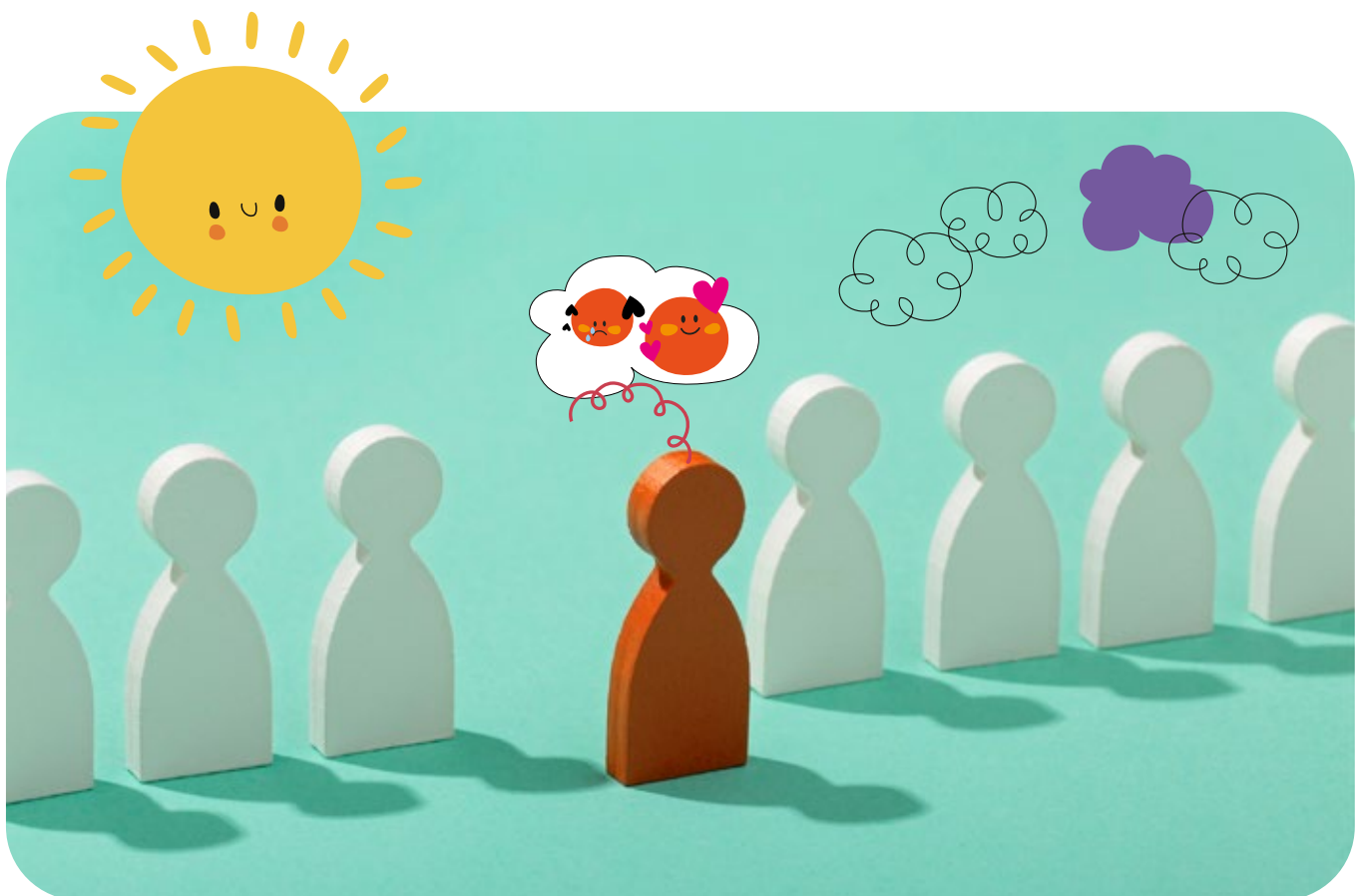
2.4 RELEVANT STANDARDS & HUMAN RIGHTS FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

In the first module of this manual, we addressed a set of international Diplomas, which emerged as a way not only to regulate and ensure access to Education, but also to ensure equal and equitable access to a full and quality Inclusive Education. We are talking, for example, about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; the Declaration of Salamanca; the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. Despite these, the truth is that there are, within each national Educational System, a set of rules that regulate Inclusive Education according to the purposes of the mentioned international Diplomas.

In Portugal, as a result of the milestone moment when the Portuguese State rectified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, a set of profound changes began at the legislative level, regarding Inclusive Education, which immediately lead to the improvement of the concept of educational inclusion. This started with the implementation of Decree-Law nº3/2008 and was later boosted by the implementation of Decree - Law nº 54/2018, making Portugal one of the countries where Inclusive Education has been successfully implemented (All means All, 2018, cit in Pinto, et. al, 2022).

With the entry into force of the **Decree-Law no. 54/2018**, a new regime of Inclusive Education in Portugal was established. This new Decree - Law, advances the idea that all students have the potential to learn as long as they are given all the essential resources for their

learning needs. There is a set of methodological options associated with this decree, namely:

- ⊙ **Universal Design for Learning.**
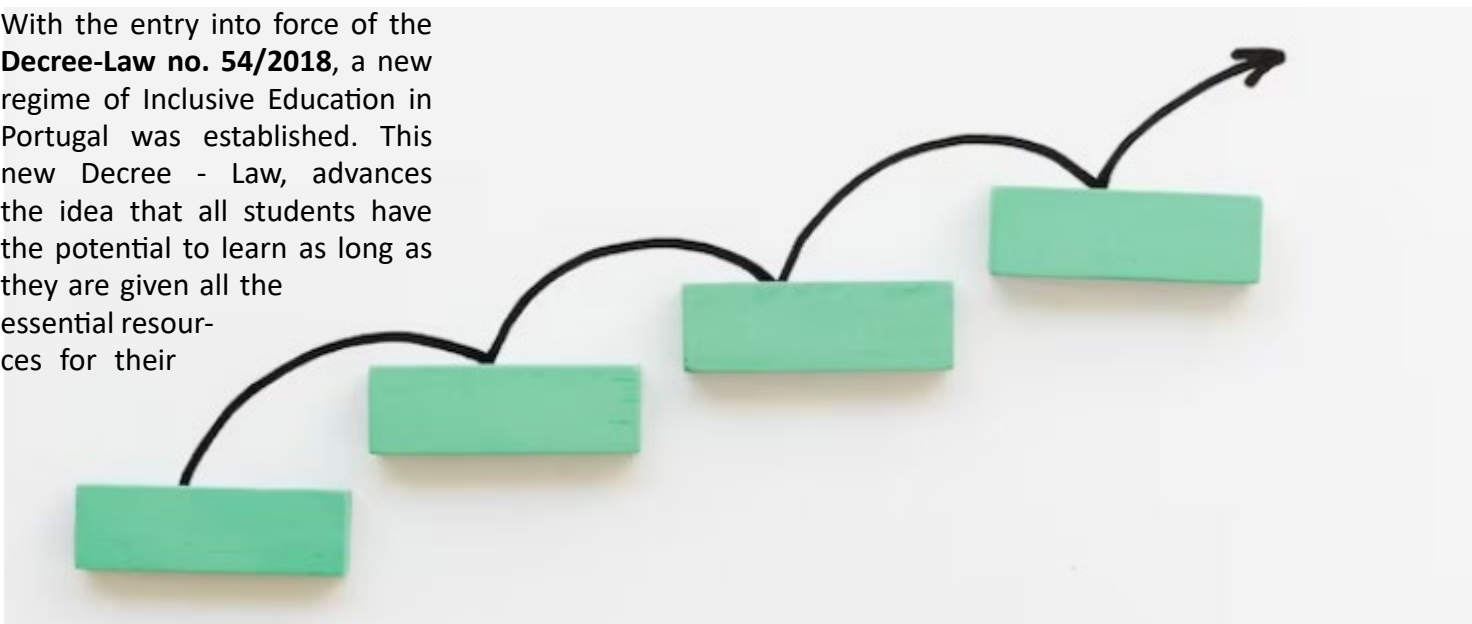- ⊙ **Multi-level Approach.**

The adoption of these new methodological options involves the implementation of the following measures:

- **Universal Measures.**
- **Selective Measures.**
- **Additional Measures.**

These should be applied according to the learning needs expressed by the students.

Considering Human Rights, this new Decree - Law introduces something innovative: the idea that it is not necessary to label to intervene, on the contrary, it transmits and defends that any student, regardless of their difficulties, can achieve a profile of knowledge and skills throughout compulsory education.

Therefore, it is necessary that there is flexibility at the level of the curriculum, as well as at the level of the assessment process of the acquired competences. In this sense, it is important the permanent dialogue between the triad teachers, parents and surrounding entities, in order to provide adequate answers to the needs of each student, as well as to value their skills and interests.

Besides the mother legislation, the one that guides the implementation of Inclusive Education in Portugal, it is also important to mention the relevance of the Decree - Law 54/ 2018 that informs the makeup of the curriculum, as well as its flexibility.

Portugal, despite the vulnerabilities in the implementation of Inclusive Education, has some of the best legislation in the world at this level. At this point, we had the opportunity to analyse the main diplomas that regulate Inclusive Education: Decree - Law 54/2018 and Decree - Law 55/ 2018.

Other guiding instruments are the National Strategies for People with Disabilities and the National Strategies for Children's Rights, which issue important guidelines inviting to practice, making entities responsible with goals and indicators. As an example, we present some guidelines which we consider assertive and which arise from the Portuguese National Strategy for people with disabilities:

- To create a support network that ensures an effective response of complementary school hours for children and young people with disabilities, which enables their permanence outside school hours, and develop free time activities and inclusive holidays.

- Deepen the Inclusive Education Model in terms of access to quality educational and training opportunities and transition to post-school life:

  ✓ Awareness-raising programme aimed at the educational community on human rights, inclusion and inclusive education.

  ✓ Strengthening the training of Directors, General Council, multidisciplinary team, teachers multidisciplinary team, teachers and operational assistants, for the consolidation of inclusive education, through the definition and implementation of multi-annual training plans.

  ✓ Strengthen the specific training of special education teachers, particularly in areas such as orientation and mobility, Braille, Portuguese Sign Language, activities of daily living, etc.

  ✓ To develop support and information materials adjusted to each area of disability, aimed at parents and the children and young people themselves.

  ✓ Creating a system for recognising schools with excellent practices in inclusive education, as well as disseminating them.

  ✓ Promoting an increase in the number of schoolbooks made available to students in accessible formats (...) among others. (ENIPD 2021-2025).

2.5 SCHOOL FOR ALL!

2.5.1 ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility is one of the characteristics of Inclusive Education Systems.

Article 9 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2007) addresses the issue of accessibility, emphasising that:

> *(...)States Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure to persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications, including information and communications technologies and systems, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and rural areas.*

Nevertheless, it is the responsibility and obligation of inclusive Education Systems to provide the necessary resources for the accessibility of persons with disabilities "The whole system must be accessible, including buildings, information and communication, (...) curriculum (...) assessment (...) and language (...) early introduction of Universal Design. (...) Accessibility is a dynamic concept" (GC4 of the CRPD, 2016). However, and according to the UNESCO Database on the Education of Children with Disabilities (2021), access to quality Inclusive Education is jeopardised, largely due to the following aspects:

- Lack of knowledge about students' educational needs.
- Lack of trained teachers.
- Lack of adequate pedagogical support in the classroom environment.
- Accessible facilities.

Thus, for everyone to have access to a quality education system, it is necessary not only the development of policies, but also the effort and participation of the whole community in the removal of barriers that hinder access to a quality and equal school.

2.5.2 EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOSOCIAL PROTECTION

Interventions targeting students with learning difficulties focus mainly on the acquisition of academic skills (reading, writing and arithmetic), with little emphasis on the emotional and social aspects of these students. The difficulties of these subjects are not only focused on the acquisition of learning skills, but are also related to the emotional and social aspects of their education (Schiff & Joshi, 2016).

According to the American Psychiatric Association, specific learning disabilities may lead to consequences throughout the subject's life, namely:

a) Psychological distress.

b) Impaired mental health.

c) Depressive behaviours.

d) Early school leaving.

Nevertheless, these students may also manifest a set of social and emotional challenges, namely

a) Rejection

b) Isolation.

c) peer pressure.

d) Low self-esteem.

e) Low self-efficacy.

Studies show that students with these characteristics are not only more prone to isolation, but also to social rejection. In this sense, they have less opportunity to develop friendship bonds with their peers and, consequently, develop states of loneliness (Mugnaini., et al, 2009, cited in Cavioni, et al, 2017). Isolation, demands from the school and repeated experiences of school failure also contribute to the development of low self-esteem and self-efficacy, leading, in turn, to feelings of discomfort, anxiety and frustration on the part of the student (Zeleke, 2004, cited in Cavioni, et al, 2017). Now, this whole environment has an impact, not only at the level of motivation, but also on the student's own involvement during the learning process (Nelson & Harwood, 2011, cited in Cavioni, el al, 2017).

Students diagnosed with learning difficulties show less ability to manage conflicts compared to their peers who do not manifest this difficulty. Thus, they manifest greater difficulty in positive social iterations, as well as verbal and non-verbal aggressive behaviours (Cullinan, 2002, cit in Cavioni, et al, 2017).

Safe schools and non-formal learning spaces are some of the most beneficial environments for children and adolescents going through a period of uncertainty. Intentional investment in education-based psychosocial support has providing stable routines and opportunities for friendship, fostering hope, reducing stress, and promoting self-expression and collaboration (Action for the Rights of Children, 2002, unpublished manuscript; Alexander, Boothby, and Wessells, 2010; Masten, Gewirtz, and Sapienza, 2013).

Psychosocial well-being is an important precursor to learning and is central to academic success and therefore has a major impact on the future prospects of both individuals and societies.

Research, here, has demonstrated the importance of developing positive self-concept through non-academic skills/ domains such as:

a) The social domain.

b) Emotional education.

c) Promotion of physical activity.

The implementation of psychomotor activities is a positive factor for the promotion and protection of self-esteem. On the other hand, extracurricular activities in non-formal settings are essential for the practice and development of social skills (Brooks, 2013).

SEL (Social Emotional Learning) methods are an integral part of the development as well as the education of the subject. It is a process by which all individuals acquire a set, not only of knowledge, but also of skills and attitudes towards developing emotionally healthy people who know how to deal with their emotions in order to "achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions." (CASEL, 2022). These work best when they are integrated into the different areas of young people's lives. Bringing children together with their peers, parents, families and community in these educational settings helps to create a supportive environment that fosters greater psychosocial well-being. Ideally, the educational and community environment around children should work together to ensure that they receive the best possible care and support. This includes communication between parents and teachers, counsellors if necessary, etc.

There are several studies indicating the positive impact of SEL (Social Emotional Learning) methods on students with learning difficulties, namely: decrease in aggressive behaviour as well as anti-social behaviour. Nevertheless, studies also indicate a significant impact at the level of attitudes towards the student him/herself and peers, as well

as at the level of acquired learning (Taylor, Oberle, Durlak, & Weissberg, 2017, cited in Cavioni, et al, 2017). Still on this point, it is important to mention two programmes for the development of socio-emotional skills that have proven to be positive in students with specific educational needs:

PATHS PROGRAMME

The PATHS programme, a programme for the development of children's emotional competencies, in its effectiveness evaluation showed:

- ☼ A reduction in behavioural problems such as aggression at school (for both regular pupils and pupils with special needs)
- ☼ A decrease in depression and sadness among students with SEN.

KIDSMATTER

This is a national SEL framework, implemented in Australian schools. This initiative was developed with the aim of:

- ☼ Decrease mental health difficulties
- ☼ Improve the well-being of students with disability.

We had the opportunity to verify that students with special educational needs do indeed present a number of challenges, both emotionally and socially. However, the importance of promoting SEL (Social Emotional Learning) was highlighted as a means to develop emotionally healthy subjects, able to face the barriers that may be imposed on them. Nevertheless, programmes were also mentioned, such as PATHS, which have obtained positive results, namely in students with specific educational needs.

2.5.3 The educational needs of disabled children

Children with disabilities, due to the difficulties presented during the learning process, need a set of adaptations so that they can see their school objectives achieved. It is therefore up to the Education System, as well as schools, to be aware of their needs and provide the necessary adjustments.

It is important that the school makes a diagnosis regarding the real educational needs of the students, which will depend on the difficulties and limitations presented.

In this sense, and considering the information provided by nidirect government services, we can present some needs:

- Help during work in the classroom context.

- Need for adequate accompaniment in activities such as reading, writing and understanding information.

- Help to express an idea and/or understand the information transmitted by the interlocutor

- Support in the interaction with colleagues and teachers.

- Help with organisation.

In spite of the needs mentioned above, we can still highlight the following aspects to consider:

- Motivation, through the use of resources that allow capturing and maintaining the student's interest, thus allowing a facilitated learning process.

- To adapt the tasks to the student's time. This will allow the student to reach their academic goal.

- The transmission of confidence on the part of the educator will allow the development of the student's self confidence, which in turn will lead to the student being better able to face his/her challenges.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

RECOMMENDED COURSE

Inclusive Education: Essential Knowledge for Success - Inclusive Education Online Course - FutureLearn: Online course aimed not only at the school community, but also to all those interested in this theme. In this course will be addressed topics such as: What is Inclusive Education; The concepts related to Inclusive Education; Inclusive Education in a school context. At the end of the course students will be able to: Explain the evolution of Inclusive Education; Distinguish the concepts integration, special education, as well as inclusive education; Explain the Social model of disability, as well as the principles of Universal design.

VIDEO

There is no Education without Inclusion - Those who work with children and young people know that it is not always clear what a disability is and what the difference between a disability and a handicap is. When we talk about developmental disorders, the discourse and its understanding become even more abstract.

This video seeks to address this need in terms of literacy for health education. Besides clarifying concepts, it allows everyone to get to know the most common disabilities and to understand what kind of disabilities each one entails.

It is in knowing to understand that true inclusion begins.
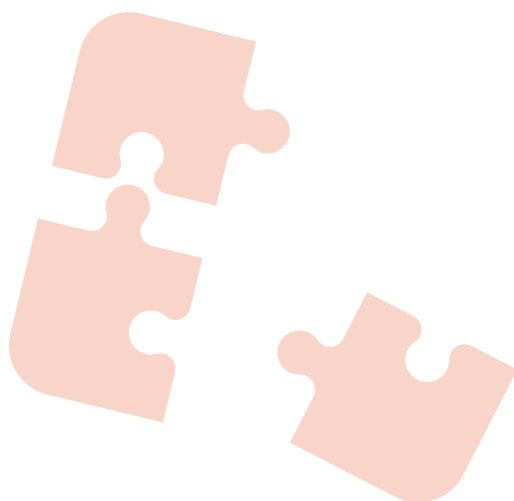
RECOMMENDED READINGS

Inclusive School Practices Toolkit - Disability Microaggressions in Education: Inclusive School Communities (inclusive school communities.org.au): This toolkit was created as part of the Inclusive School Communities project. It is a tool that supports the teaching community in developing safe, cohesive and inclusive school cultures by helping educators to identify microaggressions as well as to combat them through proactive strategies.

Response_to_Intervention_A_Model_for_Change_to_Build_Teacher_Capacity.docx (live.com): Response to Intervention is a multi-level approach aimed at the early identification of pupils with specific educational needs and the provision of support appropriate to their needs. This tool introduces 'response to intervention', including key features for its implementation, as well as practical examples of what schools can implement.
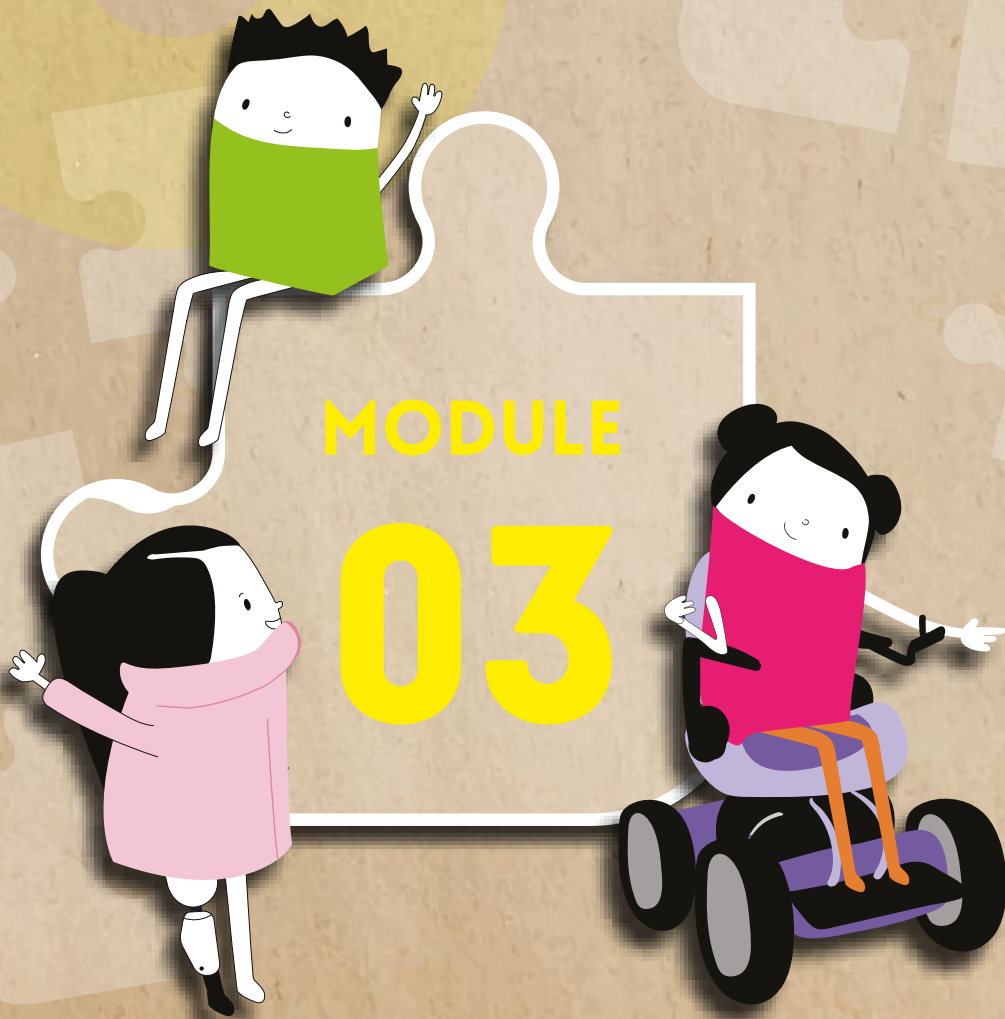
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"Need help?"

[AN INCLUSIVE]
SCHOOL

MODULE
03

MODULE 3

3. THE INCLUSIVE SCHOOL

When we talk about inclusion, according to UNESCO (2005) it is important to emphasise:

Inclusion is interested in:

👍 Accepting diversity.

👍 Benefiting all learners, not just those who are excluded.

👍 Admitting children who may feel excluded.

👍 Promoting equal access to education or making some provision for certain groups of children without excluding them.

Inclusion is not interested in:

👍 Reforming special education, but rather reforming both the formal and non-formal education system.

👍 Responding only to diversity, but improving the quality of education for all.

👍 Creating special schools, but providing additional support for pupils in the mainstream education system.

👍 Solving only the problems of children with a disability condition.

👍 Solving one child's problems at the expense of another child.

According to the *Guidelines for Inclusion - Ensuring Access to Education for All*, a move towards inclusive education is one which seriously attempts to promote quality in the classroom.

To achieve quality in education, changes are needed in the school on several levels:

1. Focus on flexibility and variation, both structurally and in content. To provide opportunities for a variety of working methods and individualised learning so that no pupil is left behind.

How to do this? By prioritising pupils' individual needs, interests and abilities.

> *"School for All is, ... ,*
> *a coherent but differentiated*
> *place of learning."*
> *(UNESCO, 2005)*

2. Looking at differences as learning opportunities:

- Putting the learner at the centre does not mean that learners need to be taught separately to learn the school subjects and content. Individual adaptations can be made in the organisation of the classroom.

- Furthermore, the pupils can support each other according to their abilities and areas of strength.

- The and understanding of the teacher are the vehicles for building an inclusive and participatory society.

3. Quality in education is seen as much more than students' academic achievements. It is seen as a system where diversity and flexibility are seen as important factors for the personal development and growth of all students. Quality education implies the definition of strategies to overcome or eliminate barriers for the full participation of individuals.
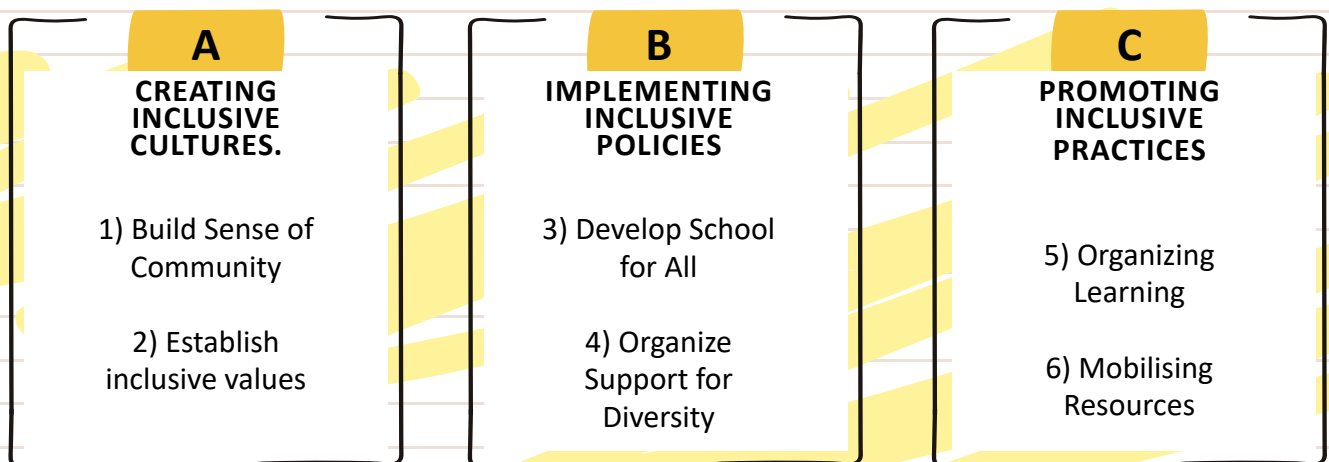
3.1 DIMENSIONS FOR AN INCLUSIVE SCHOOL

Transition processes towards inclusion often start on a small scale and imply overcoming some obstacles, such as:

- Existing values and attitudes.
- Lack of understanding.
- Lack of necessary knowledge.
- Limited resources.
- Inadequate organisation.

Inclusion involves change. It is a continuous process of developing the learning and participation of all learners. It is an ideal to which all schools can aspire, but which will never be fully achieved. But inclusion happens as soon as the process of developing learning begins. An inclusive school is one that is on the move, developing along the following dimensions:

A	B	C
CREATING INCLUSIVE CULTURES.	**IMPLEMENTING INCLUSIVE POLICIES**	**PROMOTING INCLUSIVE PRACTICES**
1) Build Sense of Community	3) Develop School for All	5) Organizing Learning
2) Establish inclusive values	4) Organize Support for Diversity	6) Mobilising Resources

3.1.1 BUILDING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Teachers, parents, communities, school authorities, curriculum developers, teacher training colleges and educational entrepreneurs are some of the actors who can act as valuable resources in supporting inclusion. Some of them (teachers, parents and communities) are much more than a valuable resource. they are the key elements to support all aspects of the inclusion process. This implies a desire to accept and promote diversity and take an active part in students' lives, both inside and outside school. The best learning place for inclusion depends largely on the relationship between teachers, parents, other learners and society. Ideally, true inclusion should be implemented both in school and in society at large.

Discussion of a student's progress and difficulties should involve the student and his/her parents. Whatever success a child is taught at school, the involvement of the family, and in some cases the community, is considered indispensable if we are to ensure that what a child learns at school is applied at home and elsewhere in daily life.

Family and community members can be important resources - if informed, stimulated, empowered and prepared effectively. Efforts to guide and assist families in the work needed to support their children will never be wasted. It is often a great challenge to get the families of the most marginalised learners involved (UNESCO, 2005).

To build the sense of community, the following indicators are defined and measured:

- Everyone is welcome.

- Employees cooperate.

- Children help each other.

- Staff and children respect each other.

- Staff and parents/carers cooperate.

- Staff and managers work together.

- The school is a model of democratic citizenship.

- The school encourages an understanding of the connection between people around the world.

- Adults and children are responsive to a variety of gender modes.

- The school and local communities develop each other.

- Staff relate what happens in school to children's lives at home.

Creating inclusive cultures constitutes the 1st dimension of the Index for Inclusion. This dimension refers to creating safe, welcoming, collaborative, stimulating communities where everyone is valued. Shared inclusive values are developed and transmitted to all teachers, children and their families, management, surrounding communities and all others who work in and with the school. Inclusive culture values guide decisions about policy and practice at every point in time, so that development is coherent and continuous. Embedding change within the cultures of the school ensures that it is embedded in the identities of adults and children and is passed on to those coming into the school.(CSIE, 2011)
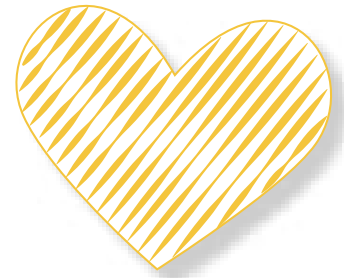
3.1.2 ESTABLISHING INCLUSIVE VALUES

Some studies have shown that the negative attitudes of teachers and adults (parents and other family members) are the biggest barrier to inclusion. children do not have prejudices until adults show them. (...) Shared values make co-operation possible, just as the lack of them makes working together difficult. (...) Changing attitudes implies significant changes in concepts and behaviour. Among other factors, this is the reason why it is so difficult to achieve change. (UNESCO, 2005)
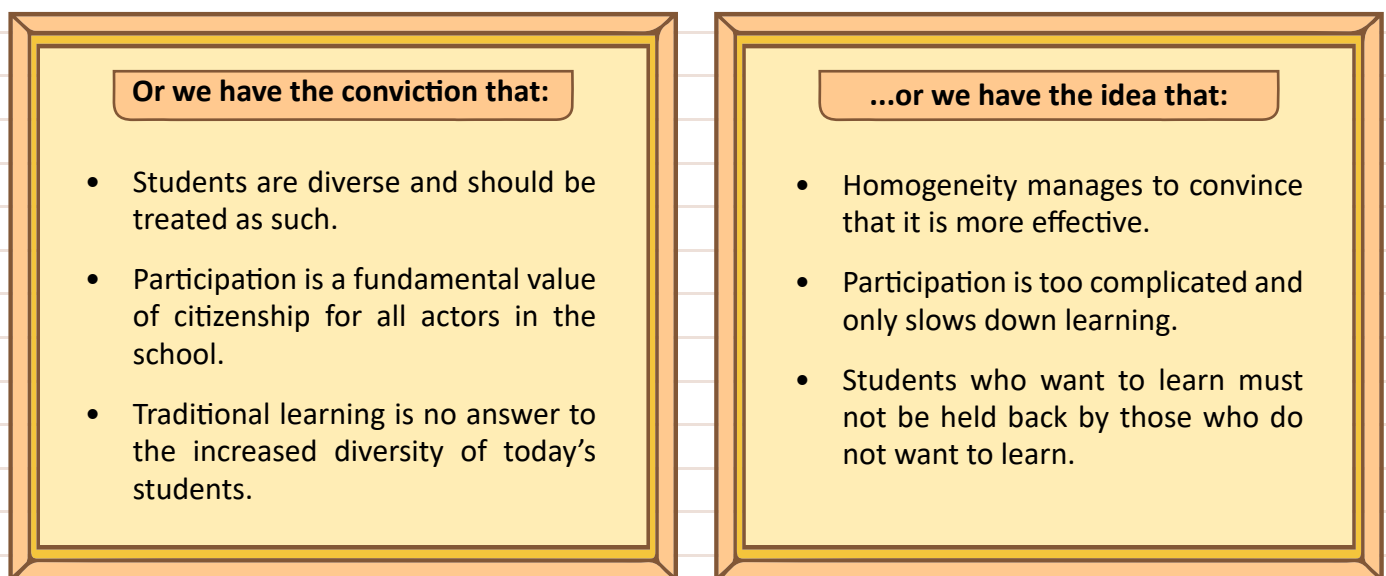

Inclusion is mainly seen as putting inclusive values into practice. It is a commitment to certain values that explain the desire to overcome exclusion and promote participation. If it is not linked to deeply rooted values, then the attempt at inclusion may represent simple adherence to some fad or compliance with top-down instructions.

Values are fundamental guides and cues to action. They move us forward, give a sense of direction and define a destination. We cannot know if we are doing (or have done) the right thing without understanding the relationship between our actions and our values. Because all actions that affect others are underpinned by values. Each of these actions becomes a moral argument, whether we are aware of this or not. It is a way for us to say "it's the right thing to do". By developing a value system, we declare how we want to live together and educate each other, now and in the future.

Being clear about the relationship between values and actions is the most practical step we can take in education. It leads us to know what to do next and to understand the actions of others. In schools, this means linking values to the details of curricula, teaching and learning activities, interactions in teachers' rooms and playgrounds, and relationships between all children and adults, as well as families and community entities.

But upstream, "we undoubtedly need to challenge ethical values that are incompatible with inclusive education", some of the values of the traditional school (Rodrigues, 2018).

Or we have the conviction that:	**...or we have the idea that:**
• Students are diverse and should be treated as such.	• Homogeneity manages to convince that it is more effective.
• Participation is a fundamental value of citizenship for all actors in the school.	• Participation is too complicated and only slows down learning.
• Traditional learning is no answer to the increased diversity of today's students.	• Students who want to learn must not be held back by those who do not want to learn.

This transition of values must be nurtured by everyday life. We need any step that is taken in the inclusive change of the school to be consolidated, to have sustainability, so that it becomes a cultural heritage of the school and is not discredited as an experience that "went well, but is over".

The 3rd Edition of the Index for Inclusion includes a list of values resulting from the discussion among all the countries that had implemented and evaluated the guidelines of this document.

All values are necessary for inclusive educational development, but five - equality, participation, community, respect for diversity, and sustainability - are the ones that can contribute most to establishing inclusive structures, procedures and activities in schools. The rights emanate from the valuing of equality, and have been included separately. However, it is important to recognise that all of these values affect structures, concern relationships and have a spiritual bond.

STRUCTURE	RELATIONS	SPIRIT
• Equality	• Diversity Respect	• Joy
• Rights	• No violence	• Love
• Participation	• Trust	
• Community	• Compassion	• Hope
• Sustainability	• Honesty	
	• Courage	• Beauty

Source: Index for Inclusion Developing Learning and Participation in Schools, 3rd Edition (Brazilian Edition)

The way these values work is developed in the online training +Including Education: From Reflection to Action.

The framework is not intended to be a prescription, but an invitation to dialogue. As people reflect together on the values that underpin their actions and those of others, and the ones they would like to adopt more consistently, they develop values literacy and become more adept at moral argumentation. This depends on a deep understanding and engagement with what values titles mean, and how they can influence action. Helping ourselves, other adults and children to analyse the values that underpin actions requires us to develop powers of reflection.

A negotiated value system can result from dialogue with teachers, children, families and school managers. It can be expressed and communicated with simple statements, such as the one presented in **Appendix 1 - Module 3**.

For a school to establish inclusive values, it should have as its goals (CSIE, 2002):

✓ Develop inclusive values that are shared.

✓ Encourage respect for all human rights.

✓ Encourage respect for the integrity of planet Earth.

✓ Understand Inclusion as the broadening of participation for all.

✓ Have high expectations for all children.

✓ Value all children equally.

✓ Combat all forms of discrimination.

✓ Promote non-violent interactions and problem solving.

✓ Encourages children and adults to feel good about themselves.

✓ Contribute to the health of children and adults.

It is also important to reflect on "how to influence the change of values and practices so that a traditional school, for some, becomes an equitable, receptive and positive institution for all?

For this change, top-down or buttom up models of intervention are discussed. Top-down models seek to invest in the creation of a new ethic, new attitudes, new representations about school, students, women, actors and knowledge. Bottom up models advocate that it is changes in everyday life, in assessment, in the curriculum, in strategies, in the relationship that have best contributed to this change." Undoubtedly, this transition of values must be nurtured by everyday life, in every classroom. (Rodrigues, 2018.p.)

3.1.3 DEVELOPING THE SCHOOL FOR ALL

The advantage of inclusion over special education has been demonstrated at various levels. Studies by both OECD and non-OECD countries indicate that students with disabilities achieve better educational outcomes in inclusive settings. Inclusive education also provides opportunities to create "social networks, norms of reciprocity, mutual assistance and increased trust".

Special schools tend to perpetuate the segregation of people with disabilities, although for students with some types of disability, referral to high quality special schools may be more appropriate than "inclusion" in a mainstream school that does not guarantee meaningful interaction between students and staff.

Another option is to combine the two systems, inclusive and specialised, in a 'twin-track approach' in which parents and learners decide whether they initially want to opt for an inclusive mainstream or special school, with inclusive education only as a last resort (Nordstrom, R & Magrab , W. quoted in UNESCO, 2005).

It is important to clarify that Education for All does not automatically imply inclusion. Inclusion itself is primarily about reforming schools and ensuring that all children receive an adequate, quality education within those schools. Inclusion needs to be the fundamental philosophy across the various programmes if the goal of 'Education for All' is to be achieved (UNESCO, 2005).

The fundamental social transformation, which is the basis for a change in the school, requires self-training. The curriculum can be an instrument to foster tolerance and promote human rights. It is the means through which children are taught respect for people's dignity and awareness of their responsibilities as national and global citizens. This knowledge can be a powerful tool to overcome cultural, religious and other differences and bring benefits to teachers, pupils and other members of society.

> It is important to clarify that **Education for All does not automatically imply inclusion.**

Developing a school for all presupposes (CSIE, 2002):

- The hiring and promotion of staff is done in a transparent and fair way.
- New staff are helped to adapt to the school.
- The school seeks to admit all pupils from its locality.
- The school seeks to have its physical space accessible to all.
- All new students are helped to integrate into the school.
- The school organises classes in order to give opportunity to all students.

According to Rodrigues (2018), the transition to effectively inclusive schools needs that:

- 👍 The School organizes itself to " see " the seeds of inclusion that sometimes blossom and are not valued or disseminated. It is necessary to "water" them.
- 👍 Pedagogical work and reflection in schools must be strengthened.
- 👍 Teachers become students of their teaching.
- 👍 The whole community is encouraged to put into practice what it considers to be right and should be done for the good of the students.

The author also recalls that "more than taking an extreme position on "whether one thinks this or that" each professional and stage of a dynamic field, sometimes contradictory, in permanent construction and always looking for balances."

3.1.4 ORGANISING SUPPORT FOR DIVERSITY

Many curricula want all students to learn the same things, at the same time and using the same means and methods. But students are different and have different abilities and difficulties. Therefore, the curriculum must take into consideration the various needs of pupils in order to ensure 'success for all'. Some of the possible strategies are:

- Giving a flexible time margin for students to study certain subjects.

- Giving teachers greater freedom in choosing their working methods.

- Providing teachers with the opportunity to give special support in practical subjects (e.g. orientation and mobility) in addition to the periods reserved for more traditional subjects.

- Set aside time for additional support for classroom work.

- Emphasise aspects of pre-vocational training.

Furthermore, some steps can be taken **to make curricula more inclusive.** In this respect, the following questions should be considered:

- What human values are being developed through the curriculum, promoting inclusion?

- Are human rights and children's rights part of the curriculum? Do they refer to the co-existence of rights and responsibilities, and how are they taught?

- Are the contents of the curriculum important for the lives and futures of children?

- Does the curriculum take into consideration children's gender, cultural identity and mother tongue?

- Does the curriculum include environmental education?

- Are teaching methods child-centred and interactive?

- How are the results recorded/integrated in the curriculum review?

- How does the curriculum relate to national assessment systems?

- To what extent do education authorities take responsibility for checking the fit between school and curriculum reviews and negotiations?

Alongside flexible curricula, flexible teaching/learning methodologies should be adopted.

Organising support for diversity presupposes that (CSIE, 2002):

👍 All forms of support are coordinated.

👍 Training for professionals contributes to responding to the diversity of learners.

👍 Policies regarding "special educational needs" are clearly and objectively inclusion policies.

👍 Existing normative devices and technical-pedagogical guidance are used in order to reduce barriers to participation and learning for all students.

👍 Support for those who have their native language as a second language is coordinated with learning support.

👍 There is articulation between policies adopted to address behavioural and counselling issues and policies for curriculum development and learning support.

👍 The school adopts effective policies to minimise the exclusion of pupils for disciplinary reasons.

👍 Barriers preventing school attendance are reduced.

👍 Bullying is discouraged.

3.1.5 ORGANISING LEARNING

Looking at education through an inclusive lens means moving from seeing the child as a problem to seeing the education system as a problem. Early views which emphasised that the source of learning difficulties lay with the learner ignored the influence of the environment on learning. It is now strongly held that the reorganisation of mainstream schools in the community, through school development and with a focus on quality, ensures that all children can actually learn, even those who are flagged as having specific needs.

What implications do inclusive values have for the forms and content of what we learn and teach?

If values are about how we should live together, then the curriculum is about what we should learn to live well. After the last few editions of the Index were published, we sometimes credited it with setting out the implications of inclusive values for all aspects of the school, whether in the teacher's room, the classroom, the playground, the relationships between all children and adults, or the way we teach and learn. But now we realised there was a big gap. We had failed to specify the implications of our value structure for the content of learning and teaching activities. (...)
Schools can be conceived as contributors in the education of communities, rather than monopolisers. Classrooms, as well as their four walls, can be understood to embrace the world. If these are our concepts, then the curriculum is for the education of communities, of all of us, not just children. It can express how we, adults and children alike, want to structure our learning and knowledge about the world, and so are not confined to schools or school years. (CSIE, 2011, p.)

Enriching learning with inclusive practices means linking learning to experience, locally and globally, as well as Rights and embedding sustainability issues. Learning is orchestrated so that teaching and learning activities become responsive to the diversity of young people in school. Children are encouraged to be active, reflective, critical learners and are seen as a resource for each other's learning. Adults work together so that everyone takes responsibility for the learning of all children.
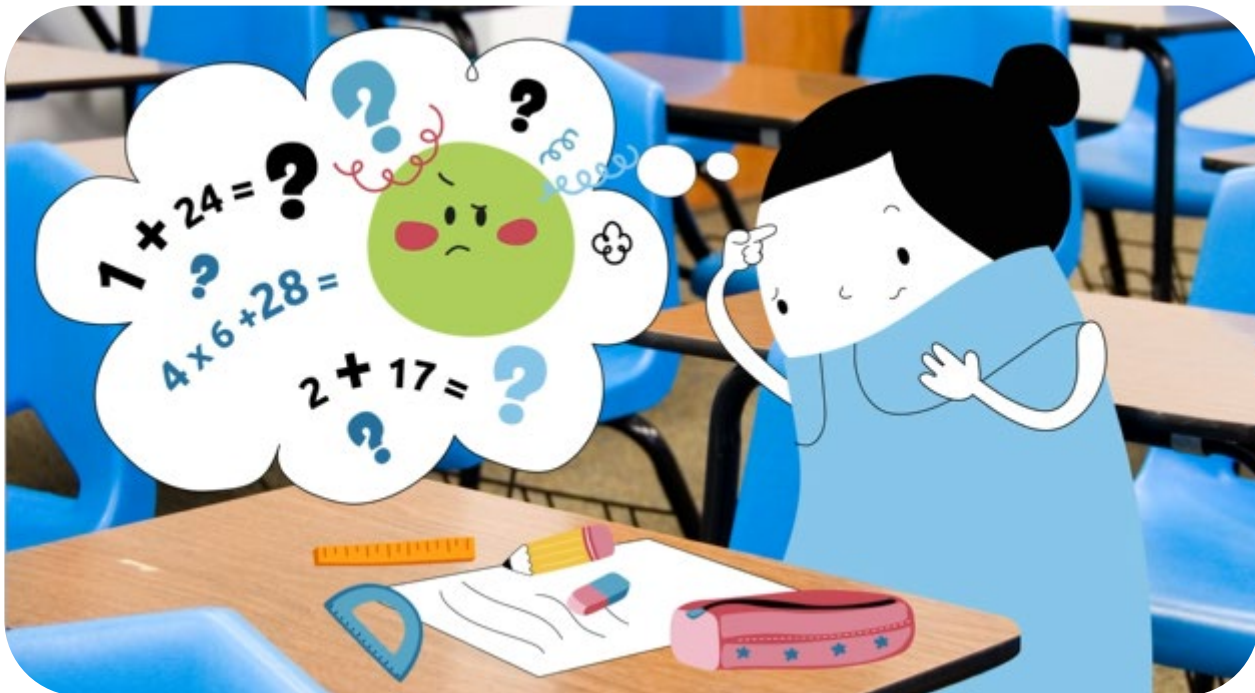
The Index for Inclusion, although produced for English schools, has been adapted for use in many other countries and translated into over thirty-seven languages and encourages people to reflect on the relationship between teaching and learning. With due attention to children's learning experience, it is possible to bring what you teach closer to what you learn.

From an inclusive perspective, if learning activities are designed to support the participation of all children, the need for individual support diminishes. Support is provided when teachers plan lessons with all children in mind, recognising their different starting points, interests, experience and approaches to learning. Support for learning is also provided when children help each other.

According to CSIE (2002), learning:

☑ Teaching is planned with the learning of all pupils in mind.

☑ In lessons the participation of all students is encouraged.

☑ Learning activities promote understanding of difference.

☑ Pupils are actively involved in their own learning.

☑ Pupils learn by collaborating with each other.

☑ Assessment is concerned with the successful learning of all students.

☑ Classroom discipline is based on mutual respect.

☑ Teachers plan, teach and assess collaboratively.

☑ Support teachers are co-responsible for the learning and participation of all students.

☑ "Homework" contributes to the learning process of all students.

☑ All students participate in the activities carried out outside the classroom.

3.1.6 MOBILISING RESOURCES

Mobilising resources involves reducing barriers to learning and participation. When values are made clear and shared by the school communities, this becomes a great resource. It creates a common direction for development, shapes decisions and helps resolve conflicts. Inclusive values are thus constant catalysts for increased participation in learning and in the wider life of the school.

There are **always** more resources to support learning and participation than are actually used. There is a wealth of knowledge in the school about what impedes children's learning and participation. One of the main purposes of the Index for Inclusion is to help schools tap into this knowledge. **The idea that diversity can be a resource for learning is transversal and evokes collaboration between all children and adults.** New curricula are expected to relate closely to children's lives and the lives of people and their communities, and human and physical environments are expected to become resources for the curriculum.

There are some **INDICATORS** that can reveal whether the education system of a particular school is on the right track to evolve towards inclusion.

The Centre for Studies in Inclusive Education has developed and refined the Index for Inclusive Schooling (CSIE, 2003). The Index takes the social model of disability as its starting point, builds on good practice and guides work around a cycle of activities that guide schools through stages of remediation, research, development and evaluation:

- Pupils are called upon to take part in all issues and activities.

- Teaching and learning are planned with all pupils in mind.

- The curriculum fosters understanding and respect for differences.

- During lessons all pupils participate.

- A wide variety of teaching methods and strategies are used.

- Pupils feel they are successful in their learning.

- The curriculum seeks to develop understanding of different cultures.

- Pupils take part in assessment and accreditation systems.

- Learning difficulties are seen as opportunities for developing practice.

In the online training +Including Education - From Reflection to Practice, we invite you in this module to follow some of the exercises proposed by the Index to consolidate the theory and move on to practice in your school.

If you would like to improve your skills in how you can make your school more inclusive, we invite you to look at the questionnaires attached to the Index for Inclusion, translated into your country (or language), in order to assess the various indicators in one document. Please note that there are specific questionnaires for students and parents, so you may also use these tools to extend the analysis to your school community.

+ EDUCAÇÃO INCLUSIVA
da reflexão à ação

3.2 RESOURCES FOR AN INCLUSIVE ECOSYSTEM

The existence of different conceptualisations about inclusion, implies, when we look at Inclusive Education, considering the three dimensions that it incorporates:

- The ethical dimension, referring to the principles and values that are at its genesis.

- The dimension related to the implementation of educational policy measures that promote and frame the action of schools and their educational communities.

- The dimension concerning educational practices.

This section of the Good Practice Handbook aims to introduce some of these educational practices. These approaches presented here are a set of tools that should be considered in an integrated, articulated and flexible way, as support guides for the action of schools in the operationalisation of the diploma at community, school and classroom level. These are operationalisation tools for inclusive education, some of them adopted as a legal requirement in the educational policies of some countries such as Portugal.

3.2.1 MULTI-LEVEL APPROACH

The multi-level approach, understood as a comprehensive model of action, of educational scope at school level, aims at the success of all and each student through the organisation of an integrated set of measures to support learning. This approach is called multi-level in reference to the way learning support measures are organised by levels of intervention.

It is a model of school action, with actions and impacts expected on different stakeholders, in different spaces and at different levels of organisation and operation. In fact, it can be said that the multi-level approach is a model of action by all and for all.

The principles underlying the multi-level approach are the following:

- A comprehensive, holistic and integrated vision.

- A proactive and preventive approach

- An orientation towards the quality and efficiency of processes.

- A data-driven structuring of decision-making processes.

"A comprehensive, systemic-based vision is adopted, which recognises the complexity, multiplicity and interconnectedness of educational phenomena such as learning and behaviour. Thus, it simultaneously contemplates, in an integrated and articulated way, individual and contextual dimensions, i.e. the student and the educational contexts." (DGE, 2018).

3.2.2 UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING

Universal design for learning responds to the need to organise universal measures geared towards all learners. **It is defined as a structuring and guiding model in the construction of accessible and effective learning environments for all learners**, constitutes an essential tool in classroom planning and action.

- It is a curriculum approach based on intentional, proactive and flexible planning of teaching practices, considering the diversity of students in the classroom.

- It recognises that the way each student learns is unique and singular.

- It is based on pedagogical practices which provide accessible opportunities and alternatives for all learners in terms of methods, materials, tools, support and forms of assessment, without changing the level of challenge and maintaining high learning expectations.

- It implies a flexible and personalised approach by teachers:

    ♥ In the way they engage and motivate students in learning situations.

    ♥ In the way they present information.

    ♥ In the way they assess learners, allowing skills and knowledge acquired to be expressed in a variety of ways.

UDL
-
Universal Design
for Learning

Universal design for learning rests on three basic principles, which support a set of guidelines for making classrooms more accessible for all learners:

1. Provide multiple means of engagement.
2. Provide multiple means of representation.
3. Provide multiple means of action and expression (DGE, 2018).

The following are the guidelines for each principle, according to the Practice Support Manual - Towards Inclusive Education (DGE, 2018).

PRINCIPLE 1

Provide multiple means of engagement

('the why' of learning)

Stimulate interest	Support effort and persistence	Self-regulation
• Provide options as to how this can be achieved, as well as the tools, learning contexts, support, sequence and time for completing tasks, etc.	• Provide periodic reminders, reminding you of the targets to be achieved.	• To present instructions, reminders and guides that facilitate self-regulated objectives, increasing the time for task orientation in the face of distractions, increasing the frequency of moments of self-reflection and self-enhancement.
• Allow students to participate in the planning of classroom activities.	• Set short-term objectives that enable long-term goals to be achieved.	• Provide tutors to model the process of setting appropriate targets, taking into account strengths to be improved.
• Involving students in setting their learning and behavioural goals.	• Differentiate the degree of difficulty and complexity of tasks.	
• Diversify activities and sources of information so that they are personalised and contextualised according to the pupils' individual pathways, culturally relevant, socially significant and appropriate to the age and competence of the pupil.	• Promote student involvement in discussion about assessment.	• Support initiatives that promote self-reflection and the identification of personal goals.
	• Vary the degree of freedom and the level of performance deemed acceptable.	• Providing differentiated role models, support and feedback for managing frustration, developing self-control and promoting challenge management skills, managing negative judgements and focusing on innate skills.
• Plan activities where the outcomes are authentic, communicate with a real audience and reflect goals that are clear to students.	• Emphasise process, effort and progress in meeting the required learning goals as an alternative to assessment and competition.	
• Provide tasks that allow for active participation, exploration and experimentation.	• Use flexible working groups and cooperative learning, with well-defined objectives, roles and responsibilities	• Use real-life situations to demonstrate skills in managing challenging difficulties.
• Include activities that promote the use of imagination to solve new and relevant problems or make sense of complex ideas in creative ways.	• Encourage and support opportunities for peer-to-peer interactions and mutual support.	• Create opportunities to visualise progress that allow changes to be monitored over time.
• Cultivate a climate of acceptance and support in the classroom.	• Make explicit the intended results of the work carried out in the group (clear and explicit guidelines, standards, criteria).	
• Use strategies which explain daily activities, routines and transitions between actions (posters, calendars, timetables).	• Provide mastery-oriented feedback with a focus on effort and persistence rather than innate abilities.	
• Use alerts that can help students anticipate and prepare for new assignments and changes in activities and schedules.	• Provide informative rather than comparative feedback.	
• Vary the level of sensory stimulation, the pace of work, the timing and sequence of activities.		

PRINCIPLE 2.

Providing multiple means of representation

("what" of learning)

Considering That Learners Differ in the way they comprehend things, there is no one ideal medium of representation for all learners. Each class is made up of students whose characteristics such as, cultural background, understanding of information , ways of understanding , privileged ways of accessing and processing information (auditory, visual, kinaesthetic), inform their different needs to access knowledge. Thus, to make information accessible, it is essential to provide multiple options related to the presentation of information.

Perception	Language, mathematical expressions and symbols	Understanding
• Presenting Information in different sensory modalities (visual, auditory, tactile).	• Association Of Vocabulary, labels, icons and symbols with alternative forms of representation (e.g. prior teaching of vocabulary and symbols, use of hyperlinks, footnotes and illustrations in texts).	• Anchor Instruction in culturally relevant prior knowledge.
• Provide visual and non-visual alternatives for presenting information.		• Use different ways of organising information (e.g. conceptual maps).
• Presenting information in adaptable formats (enlarge font size amplify sound).	• Provide alternative representations that clarify or make more explicit the syntactic or structural relations between the various elements of meaning (e.g., highlighting sentence connectors, indicate the links between ideas in a concept map).	• Foster Connections Between The Various curricular areas.
		• Highlight patterns , critical points , key ideas and connections, through clues and support that enable students to pay attention to essential information rather than incidental information *(e.g,schemata, concept map , using multiple examples to emphasise relevant aspects).*
	• Support the decoding of texts, mathematical notations and symbols.	
	• Providing Translation Alternatives for students whose mothertongue isn't Portuguese *(e.g., using translation tools, incorporating translation aids, etc.).*	• To guide the processing of information , visualization and manipulation *(e.g., presenting information in a progressive, sequential way), break down information into smaller elements, eliminate ancillary information).(e.g. presenting information progressively and sequentially, breaking down information into smaller elements, eliminating extraneous information).*
	• Translation tools, incorporate visual aids for vocabulary clarification).	
	• Present Alternatives Such as illustrations, images, interactive graphics to make the information more understandable.	• To provide explicit and supported situations for generalized learning to translate into practical situations.

PRINCIPLE 3.

Providing multiple means of action and expression

("the how" of learning)

This principle assumes that learners differ in the ways they can participate in learning situations and express what they have learned. For Example, the performance of handwriting activities for some students with motor impairments maybe a barrier to their participation and learning. Other students who have organizational difficulties will need different learning supports. Therefore, it is necessary that teachers enable the use of diverse processes and means to enable participation in learning situations,as well as the manifestation of the competences learned. In this context, the assessment process of students should adapt , both in the way each one engages in learning and with the way they reveal what they have learned.

Physical activity	Expression and communication	Executive functions
• Provide Alternatives to motor response skills *(e.g., alternatives to using a pen and/pencil, alternatives to controlling a mouse)(and/or pencil, alternatives for controlling the mouse).* • Provide Alternatives in terms of rhythm, speed and extent of motor action. • Optimise Access to support tools and products.	• Use different media for communication *(e.g. written language, spoken language, drawing music, visual arts, etc.).* • Use social networks and interactive web tools *(e.g. discussion forums, chats, etc.).* • Use manipulative materials. • Use tools for converting written material into spoken language and vice-versa, spell checkers, grammar checkers, calculators. • Using web applications *(e.g. wikis, blogs, animation and presentation).* • Provide Differentiated Models as a reference for students. • Provide Differentiated And Personalised feedback. • Provide multiple examples with innovative solutions to real problems.	• To provide support for the establishment of challenging and realistic goals, resources and associates degrees of difficulty according of effort. • Provide Guides And Checklists to support goal setting. • Integrate Reminders to support planning and strategy development *(e.g., "stop and think" before acting, show and explain work, think aloud).* • Provide Checklists And Templates for planning a project in order to understand the problem, prioritising, sequencing and • Provide support for breaking down long terms goals into achievable short term goals. • Providing Explicit, specific and timely feedback to support self-regulation of learning *(e.g. use reflection-orientation questions,using differentiated self and co-evaluation strategies).*

"The classroom application of the three stated principles contributes to the creation of accessible and challenging learning environments for all learners and should therefore be considered in lesson planning." (DGE, 2018)

3.3.3 LEARNING SUPPORT CENTRE

The learning support centre constitutes a **support structure of the school, aggregating the human and material resources, knowledge and competences of the school**, which aims to:

- Support the inclusion of children and young people in the group/class and in the routines and activities of the school.

- To promote and support the access to training, higher education and integration in post-school life.

- To promote and support the access to leisure, social participation and autonomous life.
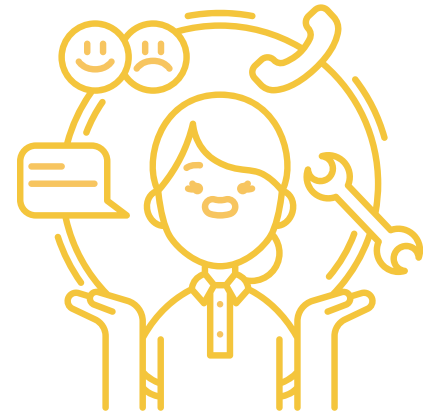
In Portugal, it works in a logic of inclusion support services and is part of the continuum of educational responses made available by the school. One was created by each school grouping, as an integral part of the schools' autonomy framework.

"The action of this centre is organised along two axes:

1. Support to the teachers responsible for the groups or classes and.

2. Complementarity, ... , to the work developed in the classroom or in other educational contexts.

The first of these axes requires close collaborative work which may include the joint planning of activities, the definition of appropriate strategies and materials, among others, which promote learning and participation in the context of the class to which the students belong.

It also includes more specific dimensions such as collaboration in the definition of significant curricular adaptations, in the organisation of the process of transition to post-school life, in the development of structured teaching methodologies and strategies, as well as in the development of personal and social autonomy competences.

The support to school professionals is also of great importance. Sometimes, information that seems irrelevant can make all the difference."(DGE, 2018)

3.3.4 SYSTEMIC SUPPORT STRUCTURES

The strong evidence of the contributions of teamwork, where all elements have a common goal and master the structuring tools, is determinant for the success of inclusive education.

A multidisciplinary team to support inclusive education, with a diverse composition, is a specific organisational resource to support learning. The multidisciplinary team has a set of tasks and competences to support the operationalisation of inclusive education:

on the one hand, to propose support for its implementation and respective follow-up and monitoring of the effectiveness of learning support measures.

on the other hand, it is responsible for advising teachers on the implementation of inclusive teaching practices, monitoring the learning support centre and raising awareness of the educational community about inclusive education through various actions.

This multidisciplinary team can function as the core of an articulated system of networking between different partners, whether they be in the field of education or health. For example: the multidisciplinary team supporting inclusive education may request the collaboration of the school health team, whenever necessary, in order to build a participatory, integrated and effective approach.

This team also has

> a crucial role in raising awareness of inclusive education by ensuring that the school adopts a strategic vision, mission, principles and values oriented towards inclusion. The dynamization of spaces for reflection and training, involving the whole educational community, as well as the identification of coherent and well-founded practices already developed by the pedagogical teams of the school can constitute an enabling means for inclusive practices. (DGE, 2018).
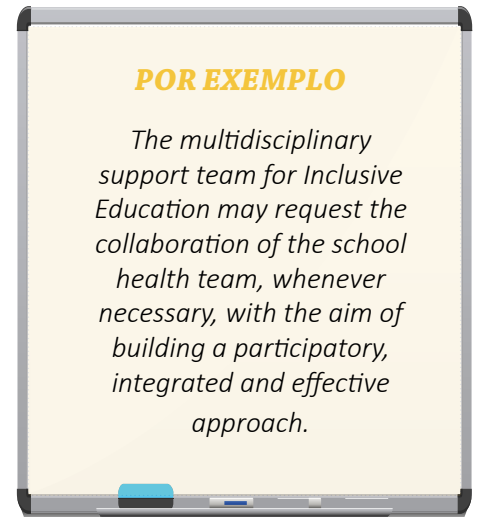
3.3.5 LEARNING COMMUNITIES

In Professional Learning Communities (PLC: Professional Learning Communities) a competency framework for inclusion is suggested, which invites teachers and other professionals to:

> ➤ Discuss and illustrate the meaning of inclusion, the values underpinning inclusion and the skills needed to enact and sustain inclusive education.
>
> ➤ Share practice and skills.
>
> ➤ Map the development of teams for inclusion.

The aim is to elevate professional learning beyond training, **empower school staff to teach inclusively,** adopt a whole-school perspective and develop a professional vision for inclusion.

Inclusive professional learning communities can raise awareness of the 'vices' in schooling, i.e. the established structures and mechanisms of the system that tend to reproduce inequalities. From there, teachers and other professionals can begin to redefine structures and collaboration, free from what was previously considered impossible.

Forming or integrating professional learning communities for inclusion, which include, for example, school working groups in addition to school staff, and also include university teacher training, postgraduate programmes, parent/family associations and other local community service providers, has been shown to be good practice, according to the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education.

POR EXEMPLO

The multidisciplinary support team for Inclusive Education may request the collaboration of the school health team, whenever necessary, with the aim of building a participatory, integrated and effective approach.

It has even developed the TPL4I project - *Teacher Professional Learning for Inclusion* which proposes to explore key aspects of teacher education and **how teachers can be effectively prepared to include all learners.** The Agency aims to include all its member countries in the project, exploring national policies on teacher professional learning for inclusion.

INCLUD-ED is also a research project, coordinated by the Centre for Research on Theories and Practices of Overcoming Inequalities (CREA) at the University of Barcelona, to **identify successful actions that contribute to overcoming school failure and dropout**, as well as overcoming the associated risk of exclusion in other areas such as employment, health, housing and political participation. One of the Examples of Successful Executive Action were the Learning Communities created, which help to achieve the goal of school success for all students.

3.3 A STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP: SCHOOL - COMMUNITY - FAMILIES

Inclusive education is in essence a plural space, not only in learning, but also in the collection, consideration and implementation of contributions from all stakeholders. Without creating communities available to effectively listen to the other, it will not be possible to rebuild the school for the 21st century, (...) rethink the motivations, strategies, mission and purposes of the school in a technological, unequal, complex society. It is necessary to create a school that is a participatory learning community, that is, where all people, including those who traditionally have less power (students, parents of lower social status, auxiliary staff, etc.) are heard and their opinion considered for decisions that affect the institution. (Rodrigues, 2018, p.)
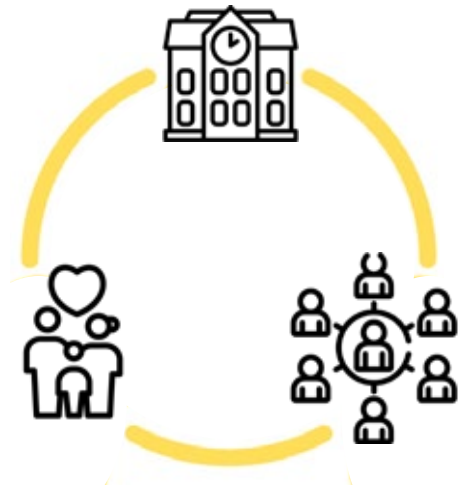
For this strategic partnership to be built the opening of channels of expression, dialogue, negotiation, participation, decision, monitoring of educational processes is fundamental.

According to Rodrigues (2018):

(...) working on education and inclusion is to assume the logic of possibility and not the logic of certainty. And to think what possibilities collaborative work, the voice of the students, innovation of strategies, new approaches to curriculum management, a different organization of the school, a different relationship of the school with the family and the community, in short.... This path is not to be walked alone. But who is at our side in this uncertainty, in this imperfection? They will be, certainly, all those who want to, all those we can captivate to take advantage of what we have and to raise the voice to claim what is essential for us to walk towards a better imperfection.

The function of Inclusive Education is therefore to lead the education system to create values and models of intervention that lead the whole school community to take ownership of tools that allow everyone to participate and feel a sense of belonging to different communities in effective conditions of equality.

Teachers, parents, communities, school authorities, curriculum advisors, teacher training colleges and educational entrepreneurs are some of the actors who can act as valuable resources to support inclusion. Some of them (teachers, parents and communities) are much more than a valuable resource. they are the key elements to support

*In order to get to know the different perspectives on Inclusion in Portugal, several Focus Groups were carried out under their remit of this project. These are presented in **Appendix 2 of this module**.*

all aspects of the inclusion process. This implies a desire to accept and promote diversity and take an active part in students' lives, both inside and outside school. The best learning place for inclusion depends largely on the relationship between teachers, parents, other learners and society. **Ideally, true inclusion should be implemented both in school and in society at large.**

> However, such a symbiosis between school and society only rarely exists. Therefore, it is the mainstream teacher who bears the main responsibility for the students and their learning on a daily basis. ... Whatever success a child is taught at school, the participation of the family, and in some cases the community, is considered indispensable if it is to be ensured that what a child learns at school is applied at home and in other places of daily life. Family and community members can be important resources - if informed, stimulated, empowered and prepared effectively. (UNESCO, 2005)
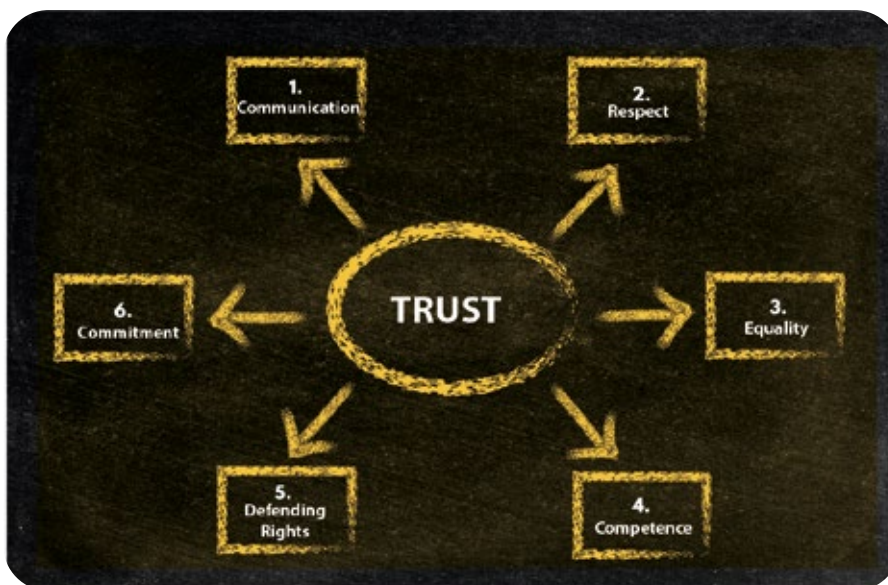
It can be seen from the available literature that developed countries have a lot to learn from less developed countries in this respect. Through UNESCO's Inclusive Schools and Community Support Programmes initiative, it is possible to see several practical examples of how countries with fewer resources have achieved effective inclusive education through community involvement in removing barriers and working cooperatively.

Ann Turnbull and her colleagues in the United States **have defined family and professional partnerships** as: 'Relationships in which families and teachers are trusted allies and share their knowledge and resources with each other'.

If partnerships are so important, what needs to happen for partnerships to work? to support work and reflection on partnerships, Turnbull and her colleagues have developed partnership principles.

There are **six key principles** in partnership development, **with trust being the cornerstone** that connects all these principles:

1. COMMUNICATION

Communicate openly and honestly with families in an environment that is comfortable for them. Some examples of how you can do this is to check with families how they want to receive messages from you about their children. Do they prefer phone calls, emails, letters, text messages or face-to-face conversations?

Try not to communicate with families only when you have bad news about the student. This can cause them to fear or avoid connecting with you.

Consider how you can also quickly and easily communicate positive messages, strengths and successes of the student to the family.

2. RESPECT

Treat families with dignity and acceptance. Consider how you can create a respectful environment for families. Think about the content you present or the activities you do in the classroom. How can you structure them to honour and include students from different backgrounds, for example?

Try to help families see students' unique strengths, rather than just focusing on deficits.

Also respectfully, try to acknowledge that families may experience many circumstances that you may not even know or understand. Ex: Don't assume that the least involved families don't care about their student's education. Maybe they can't take the time off work, they can't afford the same materials as other families, or they just don't know what they could do to be more involved.

3. EQUALITY

To practice equality with families try to recognise them as a member of the team working towards student outcomes.

Share power and work together. Often it can feel that there is a certain hierarchy between teachers and families with teachers holding the power related to the child's education.

When communicating with families, value their opinions and recognise them as experts on their own child. It is important to value the family as people who may have knowledge or ideas that can complement your own experience as an educator.

4. COMPETENCE

Make sure you are highly qualified in your field. Continue to learn and grow and have high expectations. Be a lifelong learner. Make sure you have the necessary skills to educate the student. If there are specific skills you don't already have, such as knowledge about certain assistive technologies, try to get more training or approach experts who can help you.

5. ADVOCACY

To practice "advocacy" with families, focus on coming up with the best solution for the student. Sometimes the family can feel like they are alone in advocating for the student's best interest, and it is often a breath of fresh air for an educator or related professional to go the extra mile and voice their opinions on what is the best solution for students.

6. COMMITMENT

Be available and consistent. To build a trusting partnership with families, you need to demonstrate that you are committed to them. Showing families that you are fully there for them and their children will have a lasting effect on everyone involved. Avoid trying to get families to lower their expectations of their children or to be realistic about what their children can and cannot do. Instead, encourage families to imagine the possibilities and then strive to be creative in jointly developing solutions or ways to realise those expectations.

Adequate parental involvement is a predictor of their children's success in school, especially in improving social skills and behaviour. The following is a framework for analysing family and community involvement translated and adapted from *Strategies for inclusion and social cohesion in Europe from education. INCLUD-ED. University of Barcelona for the Practice Support Manual* - Towards Inclusive Education (DGE, 2018).

FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION	
LESS likely to achieve school success and family participation:	**MORE** likely to achieve school success and family participation:
• Parents are informed about school activities, school functioning and decisions already taken. • Parents do not participate in school decisions. • Parent meetings consist of informing families of these decisions.	• Community members participate in decision-making processes. • Families and community members monitor the school's accountability for educational outcomes.
	• Families and community members participate in students' learning processes. • Families and community members participate in evaluating programs and curriculum.
• Parents have limited impact on decision making. • Participation is based on consultations with families. • They participate through the school's statutory entities.	• Families and community members participate in student learning activities. • Families and community members participate in educational programs.

Finally, a checklist is presented, translated and adapted from Booth and Ainscow, 2002 by DGE for the preparation of the Practice Support Manual - Towards Inclusive Education (2018). It is intended as a support for reflection and evaluation, by the school, regarding the existence of a culture of involvement:

VERIFICATION LIST	
• Are parents knowledgeable about school policies and practices?	☐
• Do parents know the priorities of the school's educational project?	☐
• Do parents have an opportunity to participate in decisions made about the school?	☐
• Are the difficulties and fears that some parents have in contact with the school and meetings with teachers recognized and measures taken to overcome them?	☐
• Are there different possibilities for parents to get involved in school work?	☐
• Are there diversified opportunities for parents to discuss their child's progress and concerns?	☐
• Are the different contributions parents can make to the school equally valued?	☐
• Do teachers value the knowledge that parents have about their children?	☐
• Do teachers encourage the involvement of all parents in their children's learning?	☐
• Do parents feel that their concerns are really considered by the school?	☐

APPENDIX 1
EXAMPLE OF DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT AND INCLUSIVE VALUES

IN OUR SCHOOL:

○ We want everyone to be treated fairly and to feel part of our community.

○ We look after children and adults at school.

○ We like to discover things about ourselves, what we have in common and what is different.

○ We know that we are connected to others in the world through trade and because we share one planet.

○ We care when people go hungry, suffer disease and poverty.

○ We learn from each other and share our knowledge.

○ We connect what we learn at home and at school.

○ We solve problems by listening to each other and finding solutions together.

○ We speak up when we see that something is wrong.

○ We celebrate all the different plants and animals in the world.

○ We try to save energy and avoid waste.

○ We help to make our school and the world better places in which to live.

APPENDIX 2
RESULTS OF THE FOCUS GROUP

Five dimensions were discussed:

3. Concept of "Inclusion".

4. Challenges to the practice of Inclusive Education in Portugal.

5. What is fundamental for Inclusive Education?

6. What is really missing to achieve Inclusive Education?

7. What is missing for the school to be prepared for ALL?

1. CONCEPT OF INCLUSION

There was consensus that it is about:

    a. Granting opportunity to access school.

    b. Equal opportunities to access a quality inclusive education.

    c. However, there is no equality in the use of the tools made available by the school. Response and action (how to assess, how to intervene with the student) in the classroom context, which differs, depending not only on the teacher, but also on the students.

    d. Respecting the diversity present in the school environment.

    e. The idea that "Everyone has the right", to learn under the best conditions, in order to achieve success!

For Reflection:

"Could it be that for many parents, the fact that children have access to school is not already a success, a victory?"

2. CHALLENGES IN THE PRACTICE OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN PORTUGAL

The following barriers to the implementation of Inclusive Education were highlighted:

    a. Lack of empathy (not only on the part of the professional self, but also on the part of the personal self).

    b. Lack of preparation on the part of teachers and other school communities (mentioned and addressed in **Module 1** of this handbook).

    c. Willingness to change, on the part of adults.
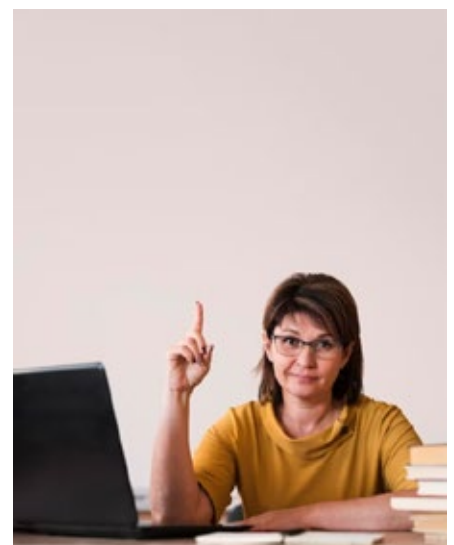
d. Difficulty in collaboration among teachers (**Module 4** of this handbook).

e. Resistance on the part of teachers to expose their work for fear of exposing their educational practices, as well as the evaluation.

f. Lack of information and sharing between head teachers and special education teachers.

g. Lack of knowledge by teachers of resources and strategies to be used in the classroom context, as well as the absence of monetary resources.

3. WHAT IS FUNDAMENTAL TO INCLUSIVE EDUCATION?

a. The removal of barriers, i.e. any impediment to the student's success at school, for example the failure of staff to pay attention to the student's needs (**Module 1**).

b. Co-responsibility, as a strategy to remove these barriers.

c. Active and attentive listening by teachers in order to understand the real needs of their students, what they want.

d. Collaborative work between parents/carers and the school itself, as an essential aspect of inclusive practice (**Module 3** of this manual).

e. Accountability of all parties involved in the education process, as well as the need to share information, not only among the teaching community, but also between the school itself and the parents/carers (**Module 3** of this manual).

f. Need to clarify the definition of the concepts for all, since practice only changes through an understanding of the basic concepts.

g. Knowledge about the diversity of students present in the classroom environment.

h. Not to be afraid to address the issues of diversity and inclusion in the classroom context.

i. To know well the needs of the student and seek appropriate responses to their needs, interests and goals.

For Reflection:

"Is more training needed? Information?"

"Or do we need to develop new forms of information?"
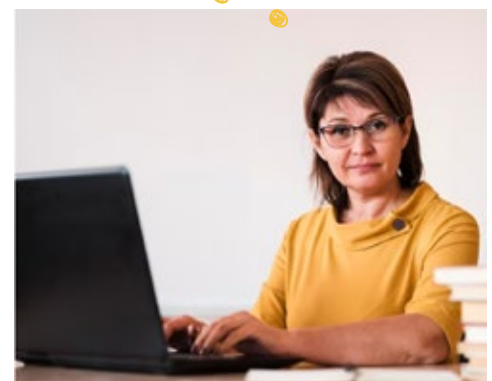
4. WHAT IS REALLY MISSING TO ACHIEVE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION?

j. Attitudes and values (**Module 4** of this handbook).

k. Autonomy and participation of all.

l. Focus more on each child, giving an individualised response.

5. WHAT IS MISSING FOR THE SCHOOL TO BE PREPARED FOR ALL?

a. Reducing the number of students per class, in order to promote greater interaction between teacher and student.

b. Creating resources (in terms of human resources. material resources (accessibility, working tools. size of rooms, furniture, etc.)

c. Changing attitudes (on the part of teachers).

d. reparing teachers and the whole school community for diversity.

e. Giving structure (organisation) to the student, providing an environment of well-being and subsequently working on the issue of the curriculum.

f. Collaboration between multiple areas of knowledge.

g. Creation of appropriate rooms for all children where they can self-regulate.

h. Creation of practice groups where the various specialists in the area could share, not only their experiences, but also good practices in the area of Inclusive Education.

For Reflection:

"How to create spaces for sharing knowledge and practices without overloading teachers' lives any more?"
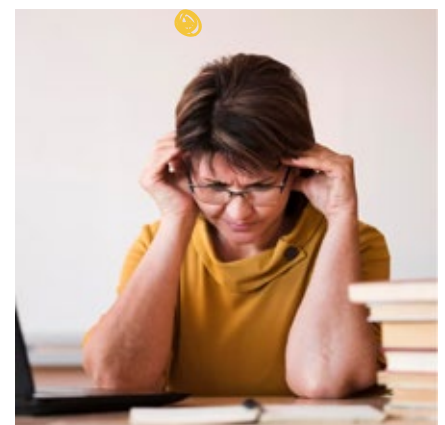
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

RECOMMENDED READINGS

INCLUD-ED Report: Strategies for Inclusion and social cohesion in Europe from education: This report summarises the main findings of the INCLUD-ED project, where the main objective was to analyse educational strategies that contribute not only to social inclusion, but also to social exclusion. It also aimed to analyse and share key elements and lines of action to improve educational and social policy.

The role of the psychologist in the multi-level approach in education. Annex 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 from Towards Inclusive Education - Support Manual for Practice, DGE, 2018.

Together we Learn Better: Inclusive Schools Benefit All Children: This is an educational resource aimed at schools, families and communities, whose objective is to promote inclusive education practices. This tool aims to empower people not only to develop but also to implement effective inclusive education strategies at school, through, for example, sharing knowledge.

The Document Key Principles – Supporting Policy Development and Implementation for Inclusive Education (all languages): EThis document developed by the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, focuses on the development as well as the implementation of policies according to a broader vision of inclusion in education systems, highlighting issues crucial for the development of more inclusive education systems.

BEST Project: This project aims to increase and strengthen the capacity of schools and the Vermont community to provide appropriate responses to the needs of students who face emotional, behavioral, and social challenges. To this end, this project provides a range of activities (workshops, college courses, webinars) to the whole community.

RECOMMENDED VIDEOS

A School for each and everyone - In this video, we clarify what disability is and what it's like to live with some limitations, whether they are physical, intellectual, or sensory. In an exercise of empathy, children are invited to reflect, feel, and understand what it's like to live with a disability and how we can contribute to making everyone feel good at school. Covering children's rights and what we can do in practice, the video's main objective is to show that it's possible to transform school into a truly inclusive space for everyone.

Vídeo Key Principles – Supporting policy development and implementation for inclusive education: This video addresses policy development and implementation according to a broader view of inclusion in education systems and educational opportunities.

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DGE, 2018. Para uma Educação Inclusiva - Manual de Apoio à Prática

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Nordstrom, Ricchler, Magrab,Wormnacs (2004) in EFA Global Monitoring report, The Quality Imperative, 2005

UNESCO, 2005. Orientações para a Inclusão – Garantindo o Acesso à Educação para Todos. Tradução de Maria Adelaide Alves e Dinah Mendonça: file:///C:/Users/Ana%20Diniz/Downloads/orientacoes_para_a_inclusao_unesco2005_PT%20(1).pdf

Rodrigues, D. (2018). *ENSAIOS sobre Educação Inclusiva (ensaiando para estrear a peça)*. (1). Edições Pró-Inclusão.

How good to see you around here!

INCLUSIVE TEACHERS,
TEACHING AND PEDAGOGY

MODULE

04

MODULE 4

4. INCLUSIVE TEACHERS, TEACHING AND PEDAGOGY

The inclusive school requires teachers to recognise the abilities of each student in the classroom, assuming that each one's ability to learn is unlimited. It is important that during the learning Process, the teacher is receptive to diversity.

UNESCO, 2020

4.1. WHAT'S AN INCLUSIVE TEACHER?

The 21st century school is increasingly a place of All and for All. A space where diversity manifests itself in the presence of students with different needs, interests and ways of being. Therefore, it is increasingly important that schools reflect on the *necessity of inclusion* and *making education more inclusive*.

> *The inclusive school requires teachers to recognise the abilities of each student in the classroom, assuming that each one's ability to learn is unlimited. It is important that during the learning Process, the teacher is receptive to diversity*
> *(UNESCO, 2020).*

Given this scenario, the need to prepare teachers for the diversity of students present in the school/classroom environment is clear. In this sense, it is crucial to reflect on what the Profile of an Inclusive teacher is and what it entails. As a result of this and as a result of the Teacher Education for Inclusion (TPL4I) project led by the European *Agency for Development in Special Needs Education*, the Profile of Inclusive Teachers has been developed.

The profile associated with the inclusive teacher was developed by taking into account a set of values associated with areas of compe-

tence that were shown to be essential. Furthermore, a set of attitudes, knowledge, as well as skills that support these competences have also been highlighted:
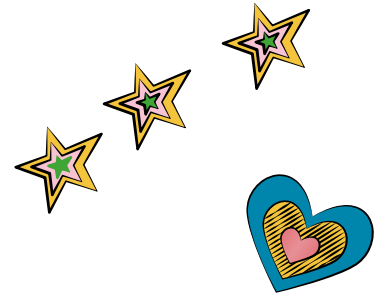
1. VALUING DIVERSITY

The difference felt in the school/classroom context is seen as an advantage, a resource during the teaching and learning process.

Associated With This Value, we highlight the following competences:

1.1. Conceptions Of inclusive education

Attitudes/ Beliefs	Knowledge	Capacities
• Idea That Education Is Based On Equality, equity, as well as the issue of Human Rights. • There is no Inclusive Education without quality Education. • 'Participation means that all learners are engaged in learning activities that are meaningful to them' *(Teacher Education for Inclusion - Profile of inclusive teachers, 2012).*	• Inclusive Education Across the Board for All learners, regardless of their needs, abilities and goals. Regardless of whether or not they are at risk of exclusion. • Inclusive Education Implies the Presence, participation and achievement of all learners.	• Ability to reflect upon attitudes and consequences of these behaviours, as well as 'using strategies that prepare teachers to change non-inclusive attitudes and to act on segregation situations' *(Teacher Education for Inclusion - Profile Of inclusive teachers, 2012)*

1.2 Teachers' views diversity as well as the issues inherent

Attitudes/ Beliefs	Knowledge	Capacities
• Viewing being different as something normal. • Respecting and valuing diversity as something that adds value to schools.	• To understand that students are a resource to facilitate learning about diversity issues. • Understand that all students have different ways of learning and these can be a resource to support the student's own learning, as well as that of their peers. *Teacher Education for Inclusion - Profile Of inclusive teachers, 2012).*	• Ability to learn from difference. • Identifying The most Appropriate Strategies for diversity is essential to the process of valuing diversity. • Participation, not only of parents, but also of families during the learning process.

2. SUPPORTING ALL

Teachers have high expectations of their students.

2.1 Promoting not only academic, but also practical, social and emotional learning

Attitudes/convictions	Knowledge	Capacities
	• Recognise the importance of collaborative work between the school, the parents and the family. • Know "(...) patterns and pathways, typical and atypical, of child development, particularly in relation to the development of social and communication skills" *(TeacherEducation for Inclusion - Profile of inclusive teachers, 2012)*.	• Effective verbal and non-verbal communication by teachers. • Ability to develop, not only independence, but also autonomy in students. • Training students to "learn to learn", among others.

2.2 Applying effective teaching and Learning Methods in order to meet the demands of a heterogeneous School/classroom.

Attitudes/convictions	Knowledge	Capacities
• Belief that all teachers should respond to the needs of All learners. • Teachers have as their responsibility the learning of all. • The teaching class should be aware that students' abilities are not static and therefore they can all evolve in their learning. • The teaching staff should be convinced that the learning process is transversal to all students, however, in some situations, where specific learning needs are manifested, adaptations should be made at the level of the curriculum, as well as of the teaching methodology.	• To have knowledge of various learning styles as well as teaching methods. • To have knowledge of classroom management methodologies. • Knowing, identifying and addressing barriers to learning, being aware of their implications for learning methodologies *(TeacherEducation for Inclusion - Profile of inclusive teachers, 2012)*.	• Work with learners both individually and in diverse groups. • Using the curriculum as a tool to access learning as well as inclusion.
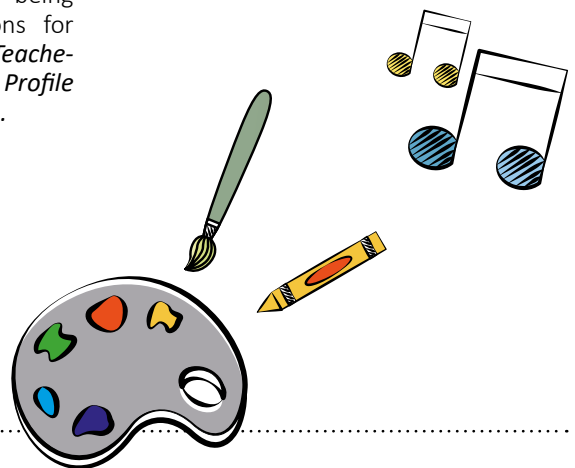
3.WORKING WITH OTHER PEOPLE
Collaboration with teachers and other educational professionals.

3.1 Working with pupils' parents and families.

Attitudes/convictions	Knowledge	Capacities
• Recognising the collaborative work between parents/families and teachers as an added value. • To respect the students' family contexts, as well as the expectations that parents have towards the student.	• Collaborative work between teachers is an asset to the development of Inclusive Education. • Knowing and recognising the importance of interpersonal skills (communication skills. building affective bonds, etc) and being aware of the impact of intrapersonal relationships duringthe student's learning process.	• Involving Parents And Families in their children's learning process. • Ability to communicate effectively with parents.
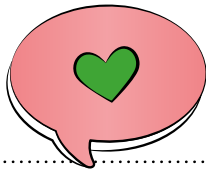
3.2 Working With Other Educational Professionals
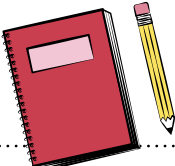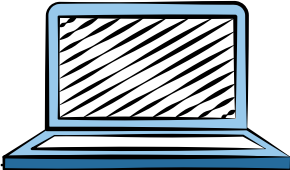
Attitudes/convictions	Knowledge	Capacities
• Inclusive Education can only be achieved with the effort and collaborative work between all the professionals who make up the school community. • Collaborative work enables the acquisition of knowledge among education professionals.	• Awareness of the benefits of teamwork between teachers and other educational professionals. • Knowledge of support structures and 'models of working in which teachers in inclusive classrooms co-operate with specialists and professionals from different disciplines' *(TeacherEducation for Inclusion - Profile of inclusive teachers, 2012).*	• Practicing peer teaching as well as working in flexible teaching teams. • Problem solving together with other professionals. having the ability to create partnerships with other educational establishments, etc.
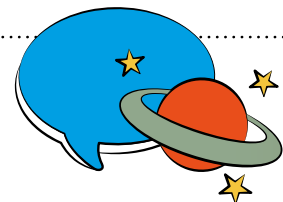
4.PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE TEACHER

Throughout his/her career, and considering the demands associated with it, the teacher should proactively invest in seeking and improving learning in order to meet the needs of his/her students.

4.1 Capacity for reflection on the part of the teacher.

Attitudes/convictions	Knowledge	Capacities
• Teaching requires not only continuous planning but also evaluation, reflection and reformulation. • Reflection Is a facilitator of effective work, not only with parents/families, but also with other teachers and educational professionals. • 'Valuing the development of a personal pedagogy that guides the work of the teacher' proves to be a crucial attitude underpinning this area of competence *(Teacher Education for Inclusion - Profile Of Inclusive Teachers, 2012).*	• Metacognitive Strategies (learning how to learn). the development of reflective praxis, as well as the development of self-evaluation and performance evaluation methods. • Development Of a reflective praxis, as well as the development of methods of self-assessment and performance evaluation.	• Continuous self-evaluation among and with education professionals about teaching learning. • "Contributing to the development of the school as a learning community" *(TeacherEducation for Inclusion - Profile Of inclusive teachers, 2012).*

4.2 'Initial Teacher Education as a basis for continuous development'

(European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, 2012).

Attitudes/convictions	Knowledge	Capacities
• Teachers are primarily responsible for their professional development, bearing in mind that initial teacher education is the first step towards the acquisition and improvement of lifelong learning. • The Search for knowledge should be seen by the teacher, not as a weakness, but as a positive attribute. • The teacher is not an Inclusive Education specialist.	• The Legislation, duties and responsibilities towards students and families are essentially important. • To seek and participate in training opportunities in order to develop skills and knowledge that allow the improvement of pedagogical practices.	• To be flexible in the practice of, adopting strategies that promote innovation and learning. • Being proactive in "(...) using strategies to seek opportunities for further education. ... using colleagues and other professionals as sources of learning and inspiration. ... contributing to the learning and development process of the whole school community." *(TeacherEducation for Inclusion - Profile Of inclusive teachers, 2012)*

In conclusion, the following table summarises the core values of the Inclusive Teacher And Associated Areas Of Competence.

TABLE 1
CORE VALUES AND AREA OF COMPETENCE OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Core values	Areas Of Competence	
Support All Students.	To promote academic, practical, social and emotional learning for all pupils.	Adopt Effective Teaching Approaches in heterogeneous classes, basedona understanding of a range of learning processes and how to support them.
Working With Others.	Work with parents and families to involve them effectively in learning.	Working with other educational professionals, including collaboration with other teachers, is an important part of the work.
Valuing Learner Diversity.	Understand The Meaning Of inclusive education (e.g. based on a belief in equality, human rights and democracy for all).	Respect, value and consider the diversity of students as something of value.
Professional Development.	"Teaching Is a learning activity and teachers take responsibility for their lifelong learning."	Considerinitialteachereducation as a basis for continuing professional learning.

Source: European Agency for Development in Inclusive Education Database (2012)

4.2 WHAT'S AN INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT?

To talk about Inclusive Education Is, in a sense, to talk about practical changes that are necessary for the access, participation and achievement of All at School. We are not talking about an education system that simply tries to benefit children identified as having specific educational needs. we are highlighting the importance of responding to the educational needs and interests of all learners for an Inclusive and Equal School. Being An Inclusive School Means Having The Capacity to include, to respond to All students, so that no one is deprived of the Right to Education. Therefore, it is crucial that teachers become aware of their responsibility as agents of paradigm shift, seeking support not only in the academic/school community, but also in communities, families, community leaders, among others, in order to facilitate students' learning.

We highlight the importance of practical changes in the school/classroom context. Changes that contribute to the development of an inclusive environment. In this sense, we highlight some attitudes to consider, namely:

1.INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT

Awareness That The inclusive environment includes physical space (including learning resources). From the arrangement of tables and chairs to the definition of specific areas associated with different activities/ areas/disciplines. For example, if the tables and chairs are arranged in a U-shape, it prevents some students from having difficulty seeing, as well as facilitating the teacher's visibility, visual contact and attention given to the whole group. In addition to defining areas that correspond to specific knowledge areas (science, reading, ...) it is also good practice to define a specific self-regulation space. This should be considered a physical resource of the classroom that facilitates the well-being and predisposition to learning of children with and without specific needs.

Ensuring emotional, physical and social wellbeing involves ensuring:

- Safety and security.
- Health.
- Joy and warmth between educators and students and among students themselves.

It should be noted that "Protection" means freedom from all forms of physical, emotional and social threats, abuse, exploitation and violence. Learners, teachers and other educational staff should be informed and protected from the dangers that exist in and around the learning environment.

The activities used to ensure learners' well-being seek to emphasise their cognitive development, sound social interactions and ensure their health. These activities encourage students' participation in decisions that affect them. By participating in problem-solving, decision-making and risk reduction, children and young people can feel more useful and contribute directly to their well-being.

To achieve this, teachers need support in positively managing the classroom. This means ensuring that the learning environment promotes mutual understanding, peace and tolerance and provides the skills to prevent violence and conflict. Positive reinforcement and a sound system of discipline form the basis for establishing such an environment and replace corporal punishment, verbal abuse, humiliating situations and bullying. Bullying includes mental stress, violence, abuse and discrimination. These points should be included in the teachers' code of conduct and systematically discussed in teacher training and supervision of activities. (Inter-institutional Network for Education in Emergencies).
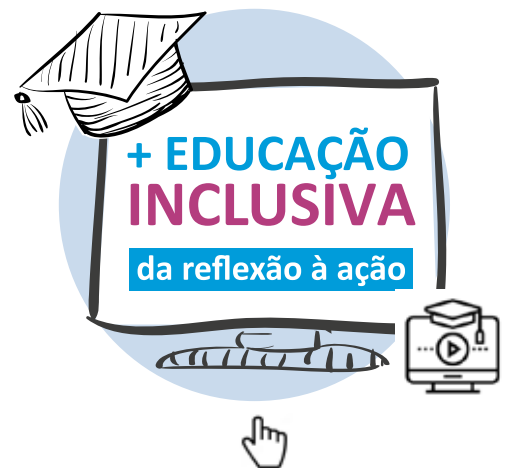
It is also important to be aware that the psychosocial environment is also part of an inclusive environment. At this point, the student's self-esteem can be worked on through group activities, namely participation in group games, where their performance is recognised and valued, not only by the teacher, but also by their peers.

2. OPENLY ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Many teachers limit themselves to teaching curriculum topics, but it is crucial to talk to students about other topics, such as the issues of difference, exclusion and inclusion, as well as possible solutions to remove barriers to Inclusive Education. This kind of action motivates students' participation and empowers them. These are topics to be worked on in a transversal and continuous way, so it is necessary to create a specific moment in the school year. Having an Inclusion Day at School may be a start, but it is not the way.

The + Inclusive Education Project, provides a set of resources that facilitate this work. On The Project's website you will find:

> ⮕ **5 videos on Inclusive Education, and Disability:**

> ▶ [+Inclusive Education: From Reflection to action](#)

> ▶ [The strength of diversity](#)

> ▶ [There is no Education without Inclusion](#)

> ▶ [A school for each and everyone](#)

> ▶ [For an inclusive school](#)

> ⮕ **A digital game that allows working on issues such as Difference, Disability and good practices in a school context.**

3. PROMOTING INTERACTION WITH STUDENTS

In an inclusive school environment, it is important to foster initiatives that invite students to discuss issues and ideas with each other. These Initiatives Help to break down barriers, thus facilitating friendships between students. In this way, they can find things in common with other children and start to relate to each other. Socio-emotional skills programmes are invitations for teachers to have prepared some activities that they can easily integrate into their daily classroom routine. It Is Important That These Practices are seen as an investment by the teacher, rather than being considered just another activity in a plan (often carried out by outsiders, without the active participation of the teacher) which is often seen as a "waste" of school time.

4. CORRECT USE OF TERMINOLOGY

Assertive and positive communication, using correct terminology, is the key to interacting with people, so it is important to observe the ways children communicate with each other, as well as how the teacher addresses them.

For example, we should not use the terminology "children with special needs", we should replace it with "pupils with special educational needs".

In **Module 2** of this Guide, namely point **2.1.1 "Disabled person or disabled person?"** you will find some examples of how the language we use should also be subject to reflection and adaptation/change.

Tools Such as *Non-Violent Communication* should also be part of an Inclusive School and should be known by all those who "live" in it. Besides Thinking What One Says, one must do it in an assertive way, without judgement and negative connotations. Practicing it during classes would be revolutionary and would promote the most challenging change in Inclusion: the change of attitudes.

5. SEEING DIVERSITY AS SOMETHING POSITIVE

Conveying as well as demonstrating that the presence of diversity in the classroom is essential. Promoting students' acceptance of each other's differences, including the teacher's, is crucial. In this way, the group will have a positive view of each member of the class. A good way to do this is to use stories which, because of their morals, will facilitate the interpretation of the values of acceptance, respect and tolerance, to adapt the curriculum and essential learning to new content that will allow in parallel to develop and enrich the students as Human Beings. Challenging students with homework which is useful to the school and which promotes this attitude is another way of looking at Diversity in a positive way: building signposting or other educational resources. organising multicultural events. inviting families to get to know different cultures and traditions, etc.

6. IMPLEMENTATION OF DYNAMIC METHODOLOGIES

Approach play as a methodology that promotes inclusion, through the use of games, activities that encourage critical thinking, as well as collaboration among students. It Is Precisely This Active learning, with an associated playful nature, that is intended with the game "+Inc Edu", available for download here. We can also consider the following dynamics/spaces that may contribute to an Inclusive Education:

- Presence, in the classroom, of a space dedicated to the exhibition of the work done by All the students in the class.
- Existence of a space where students can acquire knowledge, not only about the area of mathematics, but also about science and scientific experiences.
- Presence Of a mini-library in the classroom, where everyone can enjoy books, stories and reading moments (UNESCO, 2015).

7. ENABLE CHILDREN TO LEAD

Allowing Students to take charge of educational activities in the classroom, in this way, will allow them to stand out and make themselves known to each other, thus facilitating the inclusion process.

The child who shows a strong tendency to lead should undoubtedly be encouraged to do so, given that we live in a world which is increasingly competitive and in need of leaders. Leadership in children and adolescents makes them more active and creative in areas such as problem solving. Furthermore, the skills associated with leadership allow the development of a sense of responsibility, as well as the ability to work and collaborate in a team. In this sense, we can highlight, for example, the creation of classroom committees, formed by the students themselves, whose function is to organise learning materials as a means of developing leadership in children (UNESCO, 2015).

Letting lead implies recognising and practising "authority" rather than "authoritarianism". This requires that the teacher actually meets the characteristics mentioned in the Profile of the Inclusive Teacher.

8. GROUP WORK

The organisation of group work is another way of promoting inclusion, as children have the opportunity to share their difficulties and potentialities in a group, which helps them to better understand the contents taught, allowing interaction between students.

The work in groups and the use of peer tutoring already have results evidenced in practice and scientifically validated. In this way the teacher allows the children to promote self-organisation of the classroom environment and at the same time encourages solidarity, negotiation and sharing.

9. THE TEACHER

The teacher present in the classroom should direct his or her attention and dedication to all the students present, regardless of the students' abilities, needs and interests. In realities with large classes the challenge is increased, however it is not at all impossible, namely if he/she rethinks the pedagogical practice and uses tools such as the Universal Design for Learning and Active Methodologies, breaking with the expositive pattern and the blind compliance with a manual/curriculum.

10. RESOURCES

The teacher plans lessons in advance. He/she is aware of the diversity present in the classroom and therefore strives to bring different resources to support learning. This subject is further developed in **Module 3** of this Guide, namely in points **3.1.5 Organising learning** and **3.1.6 Mobilising resources.**

The following table summarises the characteristics of an inclusive classroom environment.

TABLE 2
CHARACTERISTICS OF AN INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT

	Traditional Classroom Environment	Inclusive Classroom
Relationship	The Teacher has a distant relationship with the students (he teaches with his back to them).	The Teacher's Friendly And Attentive to students' difficulties.
Who's Present in the classroom?	The teacher and the students do not have any difficulties. They are seen as "normal".	Students With different abilities, interests.
Where are the students positioned?	The Pupils are arranged in rows. In some areas there is a separation between boys and girls.	The Pupils are arranged in the classroom in different ways, such as sitting on the floor in two circles or sitting together at tables.
Study Materials	Use of texts, reading books and exercises.	Presence Of Various Study Materials, from newspaper clippings, posters, etc.
Resources	Teacher-student interaction takes place without the use of didactic materials.	The teacher plans the lessons and involves the students in the choice of resources to be used.
Assessment	Use of standardised assessment using assessment tests.	Diversifiedassessment, for example, assessment of the student's work over time.

Source: UNESCO (2015). Embracing Diversity: Toolkit for Creating Inclusive Learning – Friendly Environment

An inclusive classroom environment means putting into practice a set of values and attitudes, both by teachers and by the rest of the school community. An inclusive school environment includes ALL children, regardless of their cultural and linguistic background. their physical condition. whether or not they have learning difficulties. However, it is a space where difference is celebrated and participation and collaboration of all in the classroom is positively promoted.

The chart below presents a set of attitudes to consider when approaching an inclusive educational environment.

Source:
UNESCO (2015).
EmbracingDiversity:
Toolkit for Creating Inclusive Learning
– Friendly Environment

4.3 THE TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS IN AN INCLUSIVE ECOSYSTEM
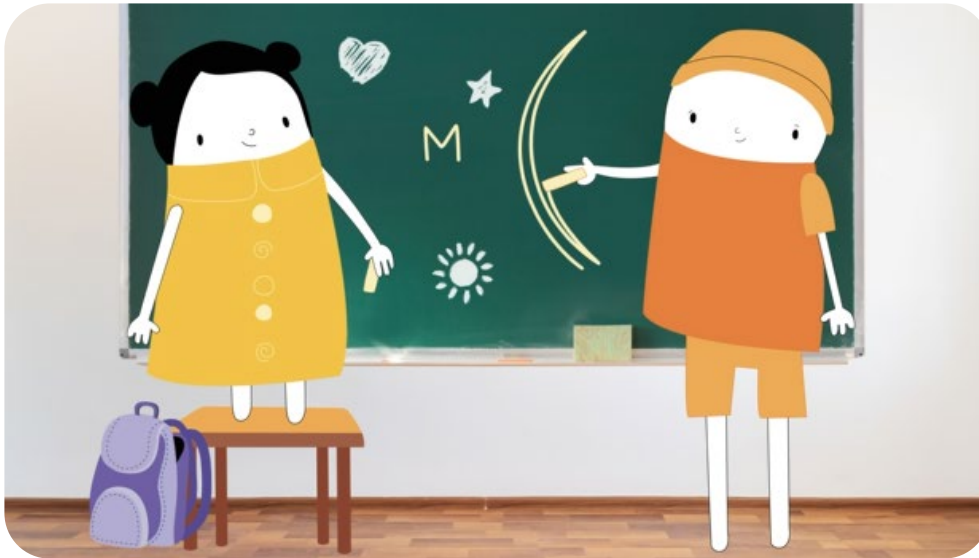
4.3.1 IS DIFFERENTIATION INCLUSIVE?

Classrooms are increasingly a heterogeneous space where student with different needs, views and abilities intersect. It is therefore a rich space that facilitates and enriches the sharing and acquisition of knowledge. However, all this diversity entails constant challenges (resulting from the individual needs and interests of each student) that can somehow condition the teaching and learning processes (Suleyman-Celik, 2019). Given This heterogeneity, it's essential to take into account the individual differences of everyone in the classroom context (Altet, 1999), in order to promote their full development, through pedagogical differentiation, i.e., the application of "didactic measures that aim to adapt the teaching-learning process to the important inter and intra-individual differences of the students, in order to allow each student to achieve their maximum in achieving the didactic objectives" (Canavarro, 2011). Here, we highlight the diversification and differentiation of pedagogical methods, as well as the flexibility of the curricula.

The difference between the students present in a classroom context, arise from several factors, namely:

✓ Cognitive characteristics.

✓ Physical Characteristics.

✓ Gender differences.

✓ Ways Of Acquiring Knowledge And Learning.

✓ Language.

✓ Characteristics Derived From Risk Situations, among others.

The inclusive teacher should be aware of the factors mentioned above, as well as of the idea that each student learns differently. Nevertheless, they should be aware of the need to know the origins of the diversity of students present in the classroom, so that they can provide the most appropriate responses to their teaching needs and objectives. However, knowledge is not enough. itisessentialthatthe teacher adopts some behaviours in order to create differentiated responses:

Adaptations And Flexibility at the level of the curriculum - they aim to promote gradual changes in curriculum management practices in primary schools, in order to improve the effectiveness of educational response to the problems arising from the diversity of school contexts. The Flexibility Of The curriculum will allow "responding to each case avoiding predefined content and strategies, enabling adaptation of content to the learning style and pace of each student (UNESCO, 2001, cited in Celik 2019).

Differentiated teaching strategies according to students' needs - presupposes the individualization of students' learning processes and involves, above all, the selection of teaching methods appropriate to the needs, so that the student achieves his or her maximum. This requires a great capacity on the part of the teacher to put in practice diversified activities, methods and teaching strategies, which require specific forms of organisation of space, time and resources.

Educational Support - providing differentiated responses is reflected, for example, in activities, teaching materials, and ways of assessing the student (Borich, 2008, cited in Celik 2019).

The idea of differentiated teaching relates to the premise that teaching methodologies should vary according to the learner's characteristics, interests and needs, where the goal is the subject's success/achievement. This could be achieved through a more individualised approach (Tomlinson, 2000). In order to provide differentiated teaching, the teacher should consider a number of factors, namely:

- The Student's Learning History.
- Knowledge Acquired By The Students So Far.
- Interests.
- Motivation.
- Skills Acquired So Far.

Once this information has been acquired, the teacher must adapt his/her teaching strategies and methodologies in order to provide adequate responses to the real needs of the student. This is fundamental for the student to achieve the desired success.

Pedagogical differentiation involves, then, understanding each situation and acting strategically in the face of it, taking into account the achievement of each student, through the constant search for flexible ways, feasible tasks according to the learning rhythms of each one. According to Pereira (2011, cited in Clérigo et al, 2017), pedagogical differentiation is an inclusive practice implying "acceptingthat diversity is a resource with which we improve our educational practice and having a different "non-complacent" look, about the richness that offers us teaching the student who escapes the norm".

We cannot approach inclusive education without first mentioning pedagogical differentiation. There Is no Inclusive School Without Differentiation, i.e. a set of adaptation at various levels is necessary, in order to allow each student to achieve success, not a required success, but a success according to the student's interests and ambitions.

4.3.2 INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGY
(CHILD-CENTRED PEDAGOGY)

First of all, it must be recognised that inclusive pedagogy should not be a lonely journey for teachers. According to the Index for Inclusion, 'Each school (...) should be encouraged to engage with another school (or more) in order to keep the momentum for change alive and to add new issues for discussion'. It also recommends a set of indicators with regard to the organisation of learning:

✓ Teaching is planned with the learning of all students in mind.

✓ In lessons, the participation of all students is encouraged.

✓ Learning Activities Promote Understanding Of Difference.

✓ Students are actively involved in their own learning.

✓ Students learn by collaborating with each other.

✓ Assessment is concerned with the successful learning of all students.

✓ Classroom discipline is based on mutual respect.

✓ Teachers plan, teach and evaluate collaboratively.

✓ Support Teachers are co-responsible for the learning and participation of all students.

✓ 'Homework' contributes to the learning process of all students.

✓ All students take part in activities outside the classroom.

For each of the indicators mentioned, the Index for Inclusion Suggests a set of questions/sub-indicators that can serve as a guideline for the adoption and/or improvement of inclusive education.

No less important is the sharing of experiences in classrooms that invite teachers to reflect on their own teaching styles and make changes in their practice. Listening to support teachers and students receiving support in order to optimise resources andwork in a complementary and more efficient way.

It can therefore be concluded that the path towards inclusive pedagogy presupposes that education professionals continuously and proactively want to:

• Deepen Their Knowledge in the field of Inclusive Pedagogy.

• Analyse And Reflect On Their Conceptions, attitudes and practices.

• Design/create innovative educational environments which ensure access, participation and success for all children/students.

To this end, the watchword is to collaborate and develop or enhance action-research skills in order to consider processes of innovation and change that facilitate inclusive pedagogy.

As already mentioned, inclusive education is a dynamic process.

As discussed in the first part of this module, rather than focusing only on specific skills and knowledge teaching strategies, teachers need to develop a reflective attitude and inclusive values. Teachers must believe that all children have the right to attend mainstream education, analysetheirschoolandclassroomenvironmentandreflectonhow to makethemaccessibleandre-levant for all their learners. They Should do this through a continuous process, because the communities, cultures, interests, needs and capacities of children and teachers are constantly evolving. Consequently, in inclusive classes all children feel equally valued (UNICEF, 2014).

It can thus be concluded that Inclusive Pedagogyis a child-centred pedagogy, which "enables teachers to meet the learning needs of all children, including children with disabilities. Key elements of child-centred pedagogy include creating meaningful learning opportunities, considering multiple learning pathways, establishing joint learning, creating attractive learning environments and using continuous assessment procedures."

4.3.3 HOW TO MAKE THE CURRICULUM ACCESSIBLE TO ALL

Rather than a discussion point about the conditions for students to be integrated into mainstream education, Inclusive Education Is a perspective on how to transform education systems and other learning spaces in order to respond to the diversity of students. Its aim is to make it possible for both teachers and students to feel comfortable with diversity and to see it as a challenge and an enrichment of learning spaces rather than a problem.

We have learned from constructive and transactional theories that the quality of learning can be enhanced by the diversity of the students involved. The teacher's attitudes and understanding are the vehicles for building an inclusive and participatory society. Investing in the quality of education for successful inclusion involves developing strategies to overcome or eliminate barriers to the full participation of individuals.

Teachers' positive attitudes towards inclusion depend strongly on their experience with learners who are perceived as 'challenging'. Teacher training, the possibility of classroom support, class size and above all workability are all factors that influence teachers' attitudes. Some studies have shown that the negative attitudes of teachers and adults (parents and other family members) are the biggest barrier to inclusion. They are the ones who show prejudice to children. Thus, opting for inclusion as a guiding principle for all these areas will have implications for teachers' attitudes.

People involved in a transition processmap need some pressure to change, but change will only be real when they are able to react and take their own positions in the process of change. In many cases, education policy-makers, parents, teachers and other actors in the school need to understand that inclusion is a process that requires changes both at the level of the education system and at the level of the school itself. This is difficult to accept as it implies the readjustment of pre--existing concepts and can have multiple practical consequences.

The Concept Of "Education for All '' therefore questions the way of teaching in a large proportion of schools. Teachers often keep the methodologies learnt in their own schools.

According to the EFA Report 2005, **"Oneway to adopt a set of relevant and balanced goals is to analyse the curriculum in terms of inclusion. An inclusive perspective of curriculum policy recognises that since all learners experience difficulties of various kinds - and even more in situations of vulnerability & disadvantage - allworld benefit from a quality basic education accepted by all."**
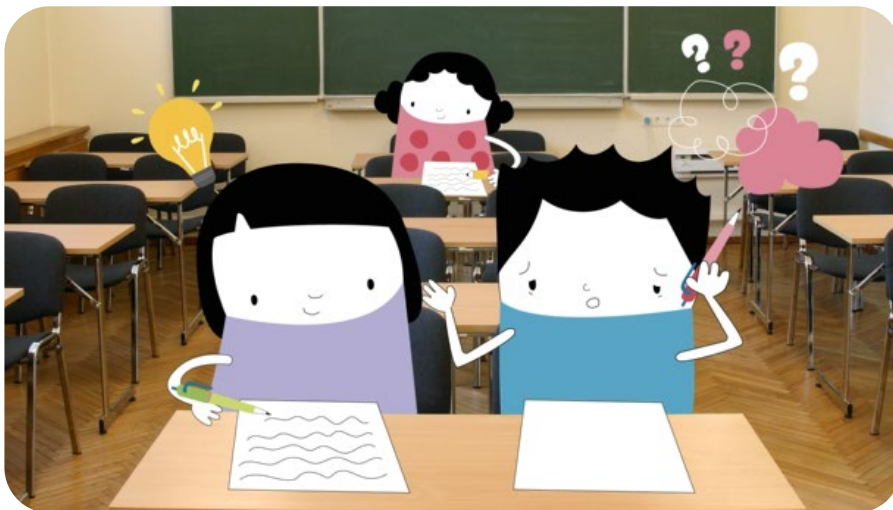
Education for All' places the learner at the centre of teaching/learning and is based on an appreciation of differences in understanding, feelings, social and perceptual skills, etc. As a result, all students have optimal opportunities to become motivated and interested. Accessible and flexible curricula can serve as the "key" to creating "schools for all". It is important that the curriculum is flexible enough to allow for the possibility of adaptation to individual needs and to encourage teachers to seek solutions that suit the needs and abilities of each and every student.

Many curricula want all students to learn the same things, at the same time and using the same means and methods. But students are different and have different abilities and difficulties.

Therefore, the curriculum must take into consideration the various needs of students in order to ensure 'success for all'. Some of the possible strategies are:

☑ Giving a flexible time margin for students to study certain subjects.

☑ Giving teachers greater freedom in choosing their working methods.

☑ Providing teachers with the opportunity to give special support in practical subjects (e.g. orientation and mobility) in addition to the periods reserved for more traditional subjects.

☑ Set aside time for additional support for classroom work.

☑ Emphasize Aspects Linked to pre-vocational training (UNESCO, 2005).

In addition, steps can be taken to make curricula more inclusive.

The following questions must be considered:

➢ What human values are being developed through the curriculum, promoting inclusion?

➢ Are human rights and children's rights part of the curriculum? Do they refer to the coexistence of rights and responsibilities, and how are they taught?

➢ Are curriculum contents important for children's lives and futures?

➢ Does the curriculum take into account the children's gender, cultural identity and mother tongue?

➢ Are teaching methods child-centred and interactive?

➢ How are the results recorded/incorporated into the curriculum review?

➢ How does the curriculum relate to national assessment systems?

➢ To what extent are education authorities responsible for verifying the harmony between the school and curriculum revisions and negotiations?

Together with flexible curricula, flexible teaching-learning methodologies should be adopted. For all of this leitura recomendadato become a reality, other changes in educational policy are needed, including changing teacher training – long, theoretical and with no practical component to continuous and in-service training. Schools often need help to change themes and working methods, and this should form part of specialized training. (UNESCO, 2005)
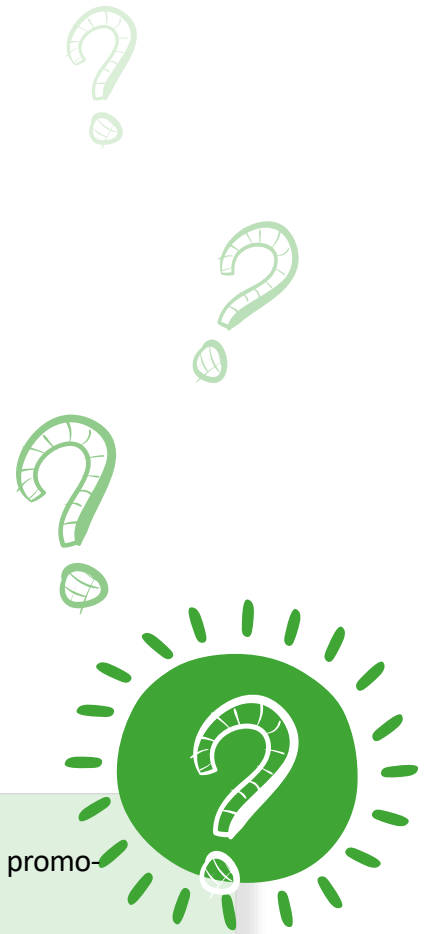
5. THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP IN CREATING INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENTS

The theme of "leadership" is present in various areas, including the area of Education. In a simple way, the concept of "leadership" relates to the idea of motivation, ability and capacity to guide someone according to established objectives (Godinho, 2013). It is a competency that requires communication and always implies not only a relationship, but also interdependence between subjects. The interaction resulting from this type of relationship between the members of an organisation should ideally promote shared decision-making which would, in turn, lead to the improvement of educational processes.

Leadership in school organisations is complex, since there is a tension between complying with legal regulations, the demands of innovation at the level of teaching and the demand for results. Thus, in addition to emotional competencies, a leader must be able to act with emotion and be able to build a relationship of trust with all the members of the organisation he/she leads. (Ferreira et al, 2015). Nevertheless, leaders should encourage learning, acting as an example themselves, and have a responsibility to guide, as well as contribute to the full development of the subject (Godinho, 2013).

In an Inclusive school, leadership is seen as something collective, i.e., the work is shared among the following agents:

- Headmasters
- Pedagogical coordinators
- Support staff
- Specialised support services
- Members of educational councils

Despite the staff mentioned in the previous point, the responsibility falls ultimately on each headmaster to promote the vision that 'all learners, regardless of age should receive a meaningful and high quality education within their local community, alongside their friends and peers' (European Agency, 2015a, p. 1, quoted in European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2021), moreover, the headmaster assumes the responsibility to promote and ensure quality inclusive education for all learners. Nevertheless, we must point out that, despite the autonomy granted to school leaders in implementing the strategy to achieve quality inclusive education, 'Inclusive school leadership is not independent from the policies that concern it. Supportive policy measures should enable individual school leaders or leadership teams to work towards their vision'. (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2021).

It is important to highlight that the direction of a school includes not only the processes of leadership, but also the management of the school itself, so it is essential to find the balance between 'managing' and 'leading', since they are different, i.e., **"Leadership focuses on values, vision and future, while management is concerned with making the present work" (West-Burnham and Harris, 2015, quoted in European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2021)**. Moreover, as we have already seen, there are several levels of leadership within the school itself, which are specifically associated with teachers and pedagogical coordinators.

LEADERSHIP ASSUMES THE FOLLOWING FUNCTIONS:

- Guiding teachers, students, parents and the rest of the educational community, so that the objectives are successfully achieved in the future.

- Monitoring of teaching processes.

- Evaluation of teaching.

- Applying legislation and policies in practice in order to develop quality and effective inclusive education practices.

- Developing a sense of community within the school.

According to the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2021, we can highlight three core functions inherent in school leadership:

- Direction Setting.

- Human Development.

- Organisational Development.

DIRECTION SETTING:

Leadership holds a key role in setting direction, particularly with regard to the values that underpin the practice of quality inclusive education, as well as in supporting the practice of it. Moreover, leadership is very influential in terms of exploring and sharing issues around inclusion, including exploring the implications raised when thinking about issues of inclusion. This aspect of leadership is of utmost importance, as it can help to "(...) promote the best interests of learners, both academically and socially, through fairness, justice and equity (Stone-Johnson, 2014, cited in European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2021).

On this point, it becomes important to consider the following issues proposed by the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education:

• Declare that the national education policy is based on principles of inclusion, child rights and equity.

• Ensure that initial teacher education and continuing professional development and training focuses on equity and diversity.

• Ensure support for learner-centered education, a culture that values the voice of learners and the involvement of learners and families in decisions about their learning and progress (particularly during times of transition).

• Provide access to communication between policy makers and school leadership on education policy and accountability.

• Ensure access to professional training and development and support headmasters' ability to fulfil responsibilities related to inclusion and equity.

• Ensure access to school leadership development support in cultivating a school's organisational identity in order to enhance inclusive school culture.

• Align school self-evaluation with the vision of inclusion.

• Establish accountability measures that monitor the application of equity principles.

• Empower school leadership teams to be flexible in adapting national policy (curriculum, assessment process, school organisation) to local contexts.

• Empower school leadership teams to appoint teachers and staff who take responsibility for and promote the achievement and well-being of all students through innovative learner-centered pedagogy.

• Empower school leadership teams to develop the school's vision.

- Confer autonomy on school leadership teams to define the vision, values and outcomes for which they (and other stakeholders) wish to take responsibility (e.g. equity, non-discrimination, meeting the requirements of all learners in the local community in terms of personal, social and academic outcomes).

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT:

Human development is one of the concerns of leadership. School leadership should focus on improving not only the motivation levels of students, but also the teachers' skills and the overall working environment. Improvement in these areas has positive consequences in terms of improving the success of all students. In order to achieve this it is crucial to

     a)   Monitor teaching.

     b)   Evaluate teaching.

Monitoring and evaluating teaching is essential, in the sense that it is the means of gathering essential information for professional development that "supports and motivates individual teachers to work for all learners" (Black and Simon, 2014, p. 160, quoted in European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2021).

In order to ascertain the extent to which **Human Development** is being achieved it is important to consider the following questions proposed by the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education:

Capacity development of the school headteacher	Employee training and professional development	Support, monitoring and evaluation of practice

• Do we engage in training and professional development opportunities to enhance our own capacity to support inclusive education practice and to foster the achievement and well-being of all learners?
 	
• Do we seek professional partnerships, critical friends and networking with other headteachers for support?
	• Do we promote and facilitate collaborative opportunities for all staff:
	
	  a. In routine aspects of the educational organization?
	
	  b. Through innovative approaches, including the adoption of new technologies?
	
	• Do we focus on improving teacher and staff motivation, skills and working environments to foster the success and well-being of students?
	
	• Do we ensure that knowledge and expertise are continuously developed and shared, both within and outside the school?
	
	• Do we provide and promote training and professional development opportunities for teachers and staff to enable them to develop their skills in improving the success and well-being of students?
		• Do we facilitate reflective practice with the aim of transforming teaching, learning and the assessment process?
		
		• Do we use data as a basis for teacher reflection and continuous improvement?
		
		• Do we promote professional responsibility and accountability and ensure that teachers take responsibility for all learners, especially those most vulnerable to exclusion.
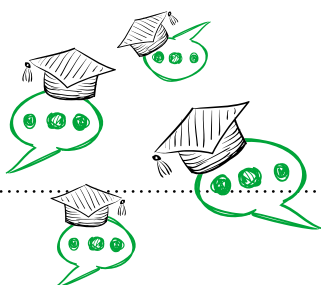
ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

The role and responsibilities of the headteacher and school leadership teams includes the implementation of not only policy but also effective inclusive education practice. Furthermore, the headteacher has a responsibility to promote a culture that respects and values the diversity present in the school environment. They should, therefore, be:

(') responsible for maintaining a school culture that is collegial, interactive and focused on supporting teachers and learners throughout the educational process. Paving the way for an inclusive culture requires school headmasters to focus on fostering teacher morale, partnerships with parents and professional collegiality. This will then affect the learning environment created for learners (Fultz, 2017).The strategic use of human and financial resources and their alignment with pedagogical goals can influence how school activities enhance teaching and learning. Thus, school headmasters need to be involved in decisions about teacher recruitment. The ability to select teaching staff is fundamental to establishing a school culture that has a beneficial effect on students' achievement (Stoll and Temperley, 2010, cited in European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2021).
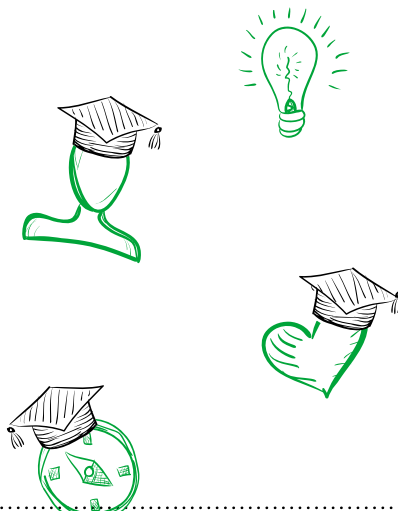
In order to ascertain the extent to which **Organisational Development** is being carried out it is important to consider the following questions proposed by the *European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education:*

School Management	Collaboration	Monitoring and data collection
• Do we manage change at the school level? a. At the level of the curriculum and assessment frameworks is there. b. Training and professional development? • Funding and resource allocation. - quality assurance and accountability? • Do we manage financial resources to meet the needs of the whole school community (students, families and all school staff)? • Do we ensure that the curriculum and the assessment process are adapted and responsive to the needs of all students? • Do we encourage and support innovative and flexible pedagogy and practice that serves a diverse group of students and is based on informed decisions? • Do we provide a wide range of opportunities and support to ensure that students can take responsibility for their own learning, successes and achievements?	• Do we develop a culture of collaboration - positive and trusting relationships? • Do we ensure a continuum of support in the school community for all students, families and staff? • Do we empower and build partnerships with: a. Support agencies? b. Other schools/institutions at other levels of the system? • Businesses in the community for the benefit of students? • Have we developed the school's capacity to accommodate diverse learners through research and professional training and development activities, in collaboration with, for example, universities?	• Do we involve the educational community in self-review and reflect on data to inform continuous school improvement? • Do we monitor classroom practice, ensuring high quality education and well-being for all?
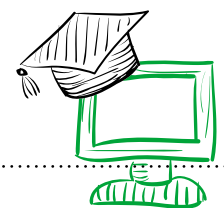
Approaching inclusive school leadership involves being aware that it transcends school management and organisation. Its main aim is to develop a sense of community within the school, as well as the active and full participation of all. However, inclusive school leadership focuses on the implementation and development of an inclusive school culture, where everyone works not only to value diversity, but also to ensure the right of all to receive a quality education, where the educational needs, interests and goals of each individual are properly addressed by the school.

When we address the issue of inclusive school leadership, we cannot fail to emphasise that it is based on **three models of leadership:**

Educational Leadership/ Well-being:	Transformative Leadership:	Delegated Leadership:
Is concerned with the welfare, learning acquisition and success of all students through the development of an educational curriculum that is responsive to all. Therefore, it is careful not only to set clear educational goals, but also to plan the curriculum and evaluate teachers and teaching. Alongside the above, it also focuses on the "(...) responsibility of headmasters in promoting better measurable outcomes for learners, highlighting the importance of improving the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom" (Day, Gu and Sammons, 2016, cited in European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2021). A collaborative working environment that can support the development of pedagogical practices that are appropriate to the educational needs of all learners is also a concern for educational leadership (Hansen and Lárusdóttir, 2015, cit in European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2021).	Transformative leadership is concerned with creating structures as well as cultures that contribute to improving the quality of teaching and learning. Furthermore, it focuses on setting direction, and personal development (Day, Gu and Sammons, 2016, cin in European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2021).	Delegated leadership focuses on assigning responsibilities to middle leadership teams able to support and manage the transfer of knowledge and skills when needed. Secondly, it enables all school staff and stakeholders to take responsibility, promoting flexibility and shared practice. Therefore, this model of leadership increases the interactions between those in formal and informal leadership roles rather than prioritizing them the actions they perform. The main concern is how leadership influences organisational and educational improvement (Harris, 2013, cited in European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2021).

In short, it is true that diversity is increasingly felt in classrooms and, therefore, it is essential to have a set of strategies that allow the development of an inclusive school, capable of providing appropriate responses to the needs and interests of each and every person. An important point to be addressed, as we have already had the opportunity to see, is the issue of leadership in schools. An inclusive school requires inclusive leaders, whose vision and values are aligned with those of inclusive education. They must, for example, value difference, value the well-being and success of all learners, set concrete educational goals and plan the curriculum.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

RECOMMENDED READINGS

Toolkit for creating inclusive and learning-friendly environments (UNESCO, 2005), only available in English, broken down by themes presented in each booklet:
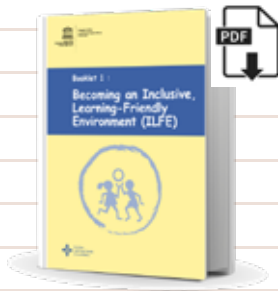
Booklet 1 "Becoming an inclusive, learning-friendly environment (ILFE)": Describes what an inclusive, learning-friendly environment is and what its benefits are for teachers, children, parents and communities. It also helps you to identify ways in which your school may already be inclusive and learning-friendly, as well as areas that may need further improvement. It will provide you with ideas on how to plan for these improvements, as well as how to monitor and evaluate your progress.

Booklet 2 "Working with Families and Communities" : Describes how you can help parents and other community members and organisations to participate in developing and maintaining an inclusive and learning-friendly environment. Gives ideas on How to involve the community in the school and learners in the community. It helps you to identify how this is already happening, and offers ideas for involving families and communities further in promotinganddevelopingan inclusive and learning-friendly environment.
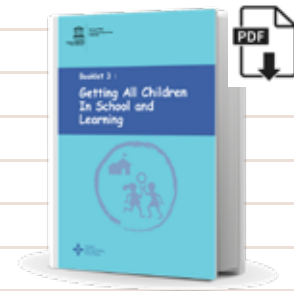
Booklet 3 "Getting All Children In School and Learning": Will help understand some of the barriers that prevent children from going to school and what to do about them. The tools are presented in th eformof a building block (step-by-step) and contain ways of including traditionally excluded children that have been used widely and effectively by teachers all over the world. Once you have worked through these tools, you can talk to other teachers, family and community members, and students about what conditions might be keeping children from learning.
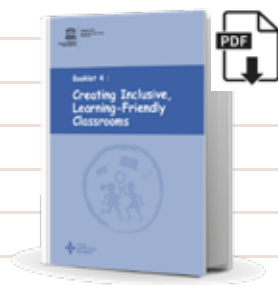
Booklet 4 "Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Classrooms": It will help you understand how the concept of learning has changed over time as our classrooms have become more child-centred. This guide will provide tools and ideas on how to deal with children with diverse backgrounds and abilities attending your classroom, as well as making learning meaningful for all.
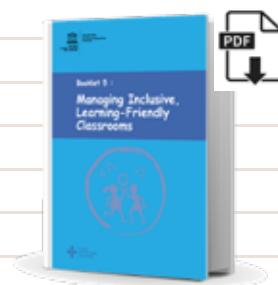
Booklet 5 "Managing Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Classrooms": Practical advice on how to manage diverse classrooms. It explains how to plan effective teaching and learning, how to use resources effectively, how to manage group work in a diverse classroom and also how to assess pupils' progress and therefore your own.
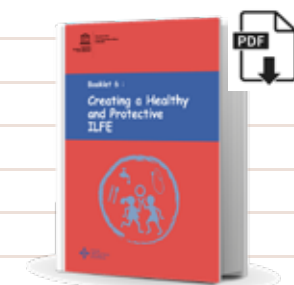
Booklet 6 "Creating a Healthy and Protective ILFE": Support to start developing an effective school health and safeguarding component. In Booklet 3, we work to get all children into school. If our efforts are successful, more children with diverse backgrounds and abilities will enter your inclusive, learning-friendly classroom. These children have the most to gain by learning in a healthy and safe environment.

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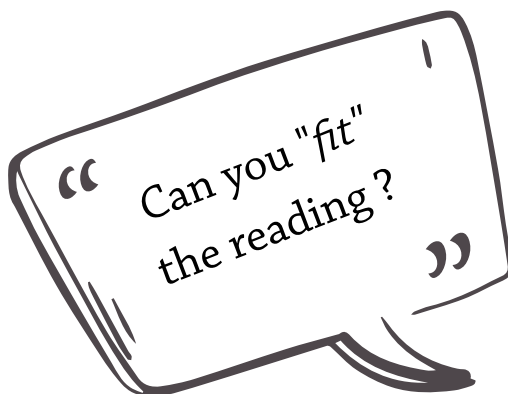
"Can you "fit" the reading?"

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN PRACTICE:

LEARNERS ON THE
AUTISM SPECTRUM
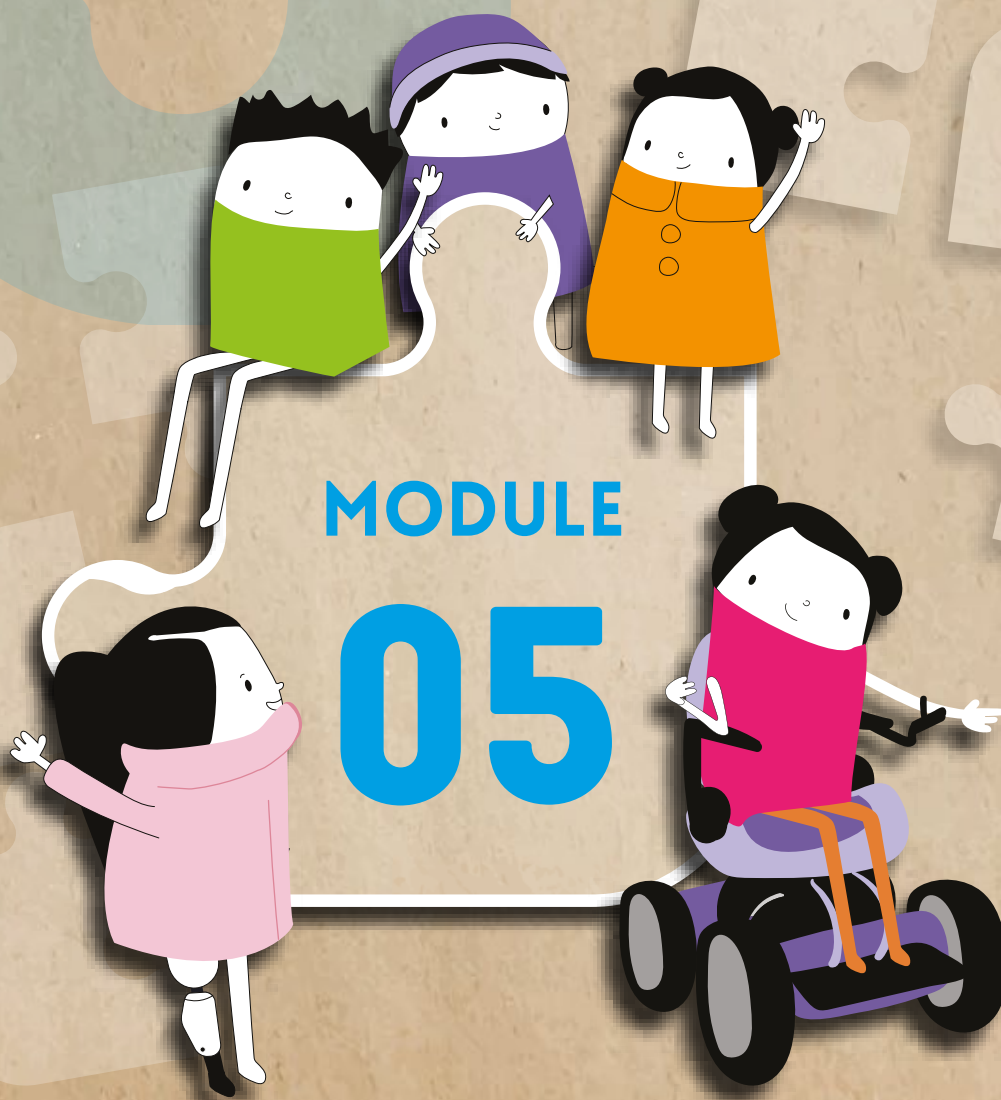
MODULE

05

MODULE 5

5. NCLUSIVE EDUCATION -
STUDENTS ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM

The term
"autism"
comes from the Greek *"autos"*
that means
"turn to yourself"

5.1 KNOWING TO UNDERSTAND AUTISM

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), is a recent terminology that emerged as a way to designate a set of subgroups, with specific characteristics, that affect the behaviour and social relationships of subjects with this medical condition. It is known as a neurodevelopmental disorder where communication and social interaction deficit as well as behavioural change are characteristics associated with this condition. It is fundamental to emphasise that because it is a spectrum, children diagnosed with this condition present different levels, not only of difficulties and needs, but also of abilities, namely at the intellectual level. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders DSM-5 designates this condition as a spectrum precisely because they manifest themselves at different levels of intensity. A person diagnosed with grade 1 has mild impairments, which may not prevent him/her from studying, working and relating to others. However, an individual with grade 2 has a lower degree of independence and needs some help to perform daily functions, such as bathing or preparing his/her meal. A person on the autistic spectrum with grade 3 will manifest severe difficulties and will usually need specialised support throughout life.

FUNDAMENTAL

Knowing that, because it is a spectrum, children diagnosed with this condition have different levels, not only of difficulties and needs, but also of abilities, namely at an intellectual level.

The medical diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder occurs during the first years of life, more precisely in the first three years. However, it is possible to recognise some of the symptoms up to 18 months of the child's life and the diagnosis rarely comes after 24 months.

It is important to note that children whose school skills and competencies develop during the usual age or are overdeveloped (maths, memorisation, for example) in comparison with their peers, may be diagnosed after the first years of school life. However, there is a possibility that they may be diagnosed as adults, which makes it difficult not only to intervene, but also to allocate the support they need.

Science has not yet discovered the real cause of this disorder, but there is a consensus that a combination of factors, not only genetic but also neurological and environmental, may be the basis of this medical condition.

THE CONCEPT OF NEURODIVERSITY

Neurodiversity is a concept that encompasses all human neurological compositions, whether typical or atypical - the case of people with ASD. The neurodiversity look allows us to understand neurodevelopmental disorders not as something out of the ordinary or in need of cure, but as part of the immense variety of natural brain formations possible among human beings.
It is the idea of neurodiversity that helps us understand that ASD has no cure. This is a condition - among many others - with which some human beings are born and that, due to its specificities, requires specialized monitoring so that the person, like any other, can develop fully within their potentialities *(Instituto Inclusão Brasil, 2021).*

The taboo around this disorder has been decreasing as the access to diagnosis, cultural productions (series, movies, books) in which autistic people are represented and also the understanding of the concept of neurodiversity advance. The increase in prevalence is also linked to the understanding of the diversity of manifestations of this disorder - hence comes the term spectrum, the letter E of the acronym ASD. When it is stated that autism is a spectrum, reference is made to its wide variety of manifestations.

There are two factors that must be present to confirm that a person is on the autism spectrum. The so-called "diagnostic criteria" are:

• The presence of impairments in communication and social interaction.

• The existence of repetitive and restrictive behaviours.

Each person with ASD will manifest these two elements at different levels of intensity, which will define where they are on the autism spectrum. But this is not a disorder that occurs in isolation, and that is where comorbidities come in. Besides the 3 levels associated to this disorder, the variety is immense - autism can manifest an infinity of comorbidities and also be associated to different syndromes - such as Down's, for example.

Comorbidity is a medical term that describes other conditions that can manifest alongside Autism Spectrum Disorder. "They are present in about 70% of individuals with ASD, and 48% of them may have more than one comorbidity." (Autism and Reality, 2020) These associated conditions may be psychiatric, such as ADHD, or medical, such as sleep disorders.
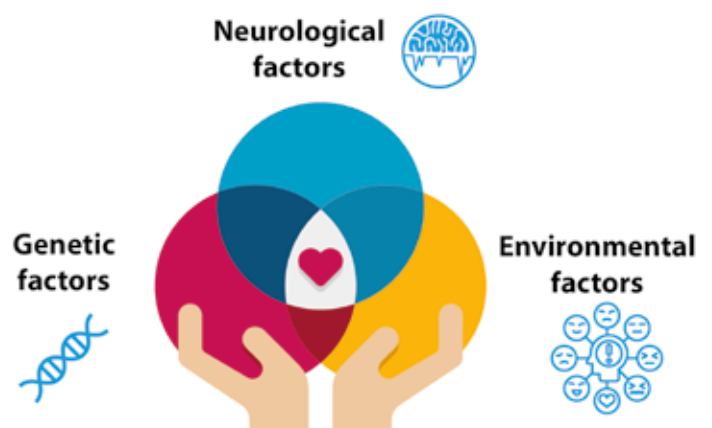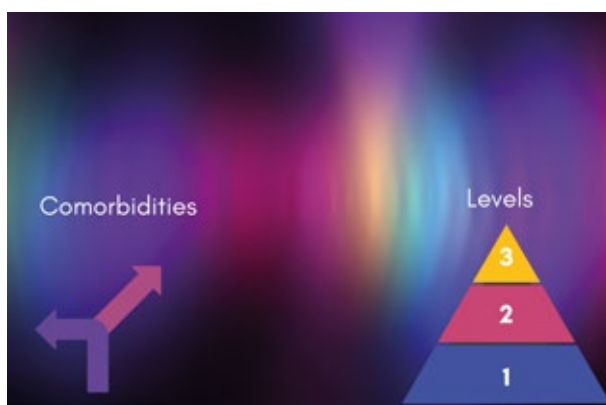
OTHER EXAMPLES OF COMORBIDITIES ASSOCIATED WITH ASD ARE:

Intellectual disability

This is a developmental disorder that causes deficits in generic mental abilities and impairments in daily adaptive function.

Language deficits

All subjects within the autism spectrum have some level of limitation in communication, such as not understanding facial expressions. "More than half of autistic people develop some problem with speech and 25% are nonverbal." (Autism and Reality, 2020).

Anxiety

or in a more correct terminology, **Generalised Anxiety Disorder,** defined as a persistent and excessive preoccupation with different issues. Emphasise that, throughout life, the focus of distress may vary from one issue to another.

Attention problems, impulsivity or hyperactivity

About 59% of people with ASD have symptoms of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), making these two disorders often confused (Autism and Reality, 2020).

Sleep alterations

Over 70% of people within the autistic spectrum may develop some alteration in sleep (Autism and Reality, 2020).

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

OCD is characterized by the presence of obsessions and/or compulsions. Obsessions are recurrent and persistent thoughts, impulses, or images that are experienced as intrusive and unwanted, while compulsions are repetitive behaviors or mental acts that an individual feels compelled to perform.

NEUROATYPICAL OR NEURODIVERGENT?

To clear up any doubts about adopting the most correct terms to refer to people with autism, without autism or with other types of disorders, we have listed simple definitions:

Neurotypical

It is a term that refers to subjects who present typical neurological development and functioning, that is, within the regular patterns. We may use this term to mention, for example, a functional adult or child who does not present significant alterations in memory, attention, cognition, among others.

The term neurotypical refers to individuals who do not manifest neurological or neurodevelopmental changes, such as Autism Spectrum Disorder.

People with Autism Spectrum Disorder are considered neuroatypical people.

All of us, neurotypical and neuroatypical, are neurodiverse.

Neurodivergent

A concept used to refer to people who have alterations in cognitive, behavioural, neurological and neuro-anatomical functioning. In other words, they refer to alterations such as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Tourette's Syndrome, Depression, Dyslexia, Schizophrenia, among others.

THE CONCEPT OF "CAPACITISM"

Capacitism is the name of discrimination against people with disabilities, a group of which people with ASD are a part. It is a manifestation of prejudice towards people with disabilities by assuming that there is an ideal body standard and the escape from these standards makes people unfit for activities in society (Instituto Inclusão Brasil, 2021).

The practice of the Capacitism reaches the person with disability in different ways, both in the access to the physical environment and the creation of barriers for them to exercise activities. independently, as the socio-emotional barriers when these people are treated as incapable, dependent, without will or own voice to express their wills.

Treating a disabled person as an infantile person and/or incapable of understanding the world is very common in Education. An example of this is the common practice of treating children with diminutives.

> **Capacitarianism thus denies citizenship by emphasising disability rather than the human person.**
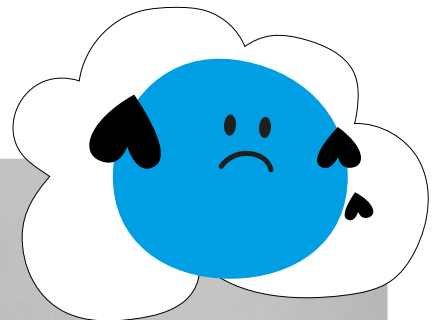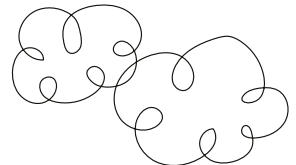
SYMPTOMS ASSOCIATED TO ASD

Despite the existence of subgroups within this disorder, we can highlight a triad of symptoms that affect behaviour in the following dimensions:

Understanding and use of verbal and non-verbal communication	Capacity to interact with children and adults and difficulty in establishing/maintaining social relationships	Repetitive and obsessive behaviour
Many children with this disorder show difficulty, not only to develop an effective communication, but also to understand the communication and language of others. Besides, many of them present speech delays and others do not develop this competence at all. In these situations, it is important to use resources such as images, photographs and gestures, for example, as a way to stimulate this competence.	Children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder have difficulties at the level of social behaviour and interactions. It is difficult for them to understand the social behaviour of others, as well as to maintain socially appropriate behaviour. These children, in social contexts, regularly manifest difficulty in playing/ socialising and communicating with peers and sometimes this behaviour can be perceived as impolite or even as lazy. Misinterpretations arising from total ignorance of this disorder.	It is normal for children with this condition to manifest repetitive behaviour. For example, these children do not play with toys in the traditional way. They prefer to watch or spin objects repetitively and constantly or, for example, spin a wheel of a trolley with excessive concentration and for long periods of time. On the other hand, there are children who develop interests in activities or themes. Despite the above, there is a tendency for these children to play in isolation from their peers (APA, 2013, cited in Lima, 2018).

Other **relevant symptoms** more associated with communication and social interaction are:

✓ Delay, or even absence of speech, including loss of previously acquired language.

✓ Misuse of pronouns (exchanges the "I" for "you").

✓ Difficulty in playing with peers.

✓ Absence of eye contact or difficulty to.

✓ Taking the family member's hand with the intention of guiding them to an object or activity they wish to do.

✓ Rare play interests or activities.

✓ Atypical responses to sounds, smells and textures, tastes and images.

✓ Resistance to changing routines.

Some children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), as we have already seen, may have different perceptions at the level of the senses, i.e. at the level of sounds, smells, touch, sight and tastes, affecting their reaction to them. This hypersensitivity has implications not only at home, but also at school.

Nevertheless, they may manifest irregular sleep patterns as well as behavioural problems. Therefore, these children have, in fact, a peculiar way of seeing, feeling and reacting to reality.

> Despite the difficulties previously mentioned, the truth is that most of these subjects have a set of abilities, namely
>
> ✓ a) Ability to concentrate on details and activities of interest, often for long periods of time.
>
> ✓ b) Capacity to direct the attention to a certain task and/or activity, thus developing, most of the times, an excellent ability level, comparatively to the other subjects.
>
> ✓ c) Better capacity to capture information through vision than orally.
>
> ✓ d) Due to their specificities, these children have a greater propensity to achieve academic success in technical-mathematical areas, such as engineering, ICT and music.

We know that ASD presents a set of characteristics that hinder the child's way of being and being, however, it is fundamental that we perceive these as a way of seeing and feeling the world, distinct from the others. Taking on this vision is crucial for society not to focus only on the difficulties that this condition brings to the subject. On the other hand, it is important to encourage people to value the abilities of these children, so that they can develop their interests and activities in a healthy way. Here, parents, relatives, teachers and other professionals are invited to assume an empathic role and try to "put on the shoes" of these children, so that they can understand them and consequently help them to overcome their difficulties and enhance their abilities through the appropriate adaptation of strategies.

5.2 EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

The educational needs of children with ASD vary according to their potential, needs and interests. Therefore, an individual assessment is fundamental to determine the most appropriate pedagogical strategy.

In Portugal, for example, these children develop their academic pathway in mainstream schools, where they are allocated learning support measures. However, this reality is not transversal to most of the education systems. In other countries, the reality is different, since these children attend schools aimed at the education of children with learning difficulties or specific schools in the area of autism.

5.2.1 THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

The classroom environment can impact on how the student with ASD develops their learning. A distraction-free and structured/predictable environment is more conducive to learning and behaviour for children who:

- **Are easily distracted.**

- **Present challenges at the level of perception (for example, they may have difficulty visualising where to sit, where their area in the room is, how to get from point A to point B).**

- **Difficulty understanding verbal instructions.**
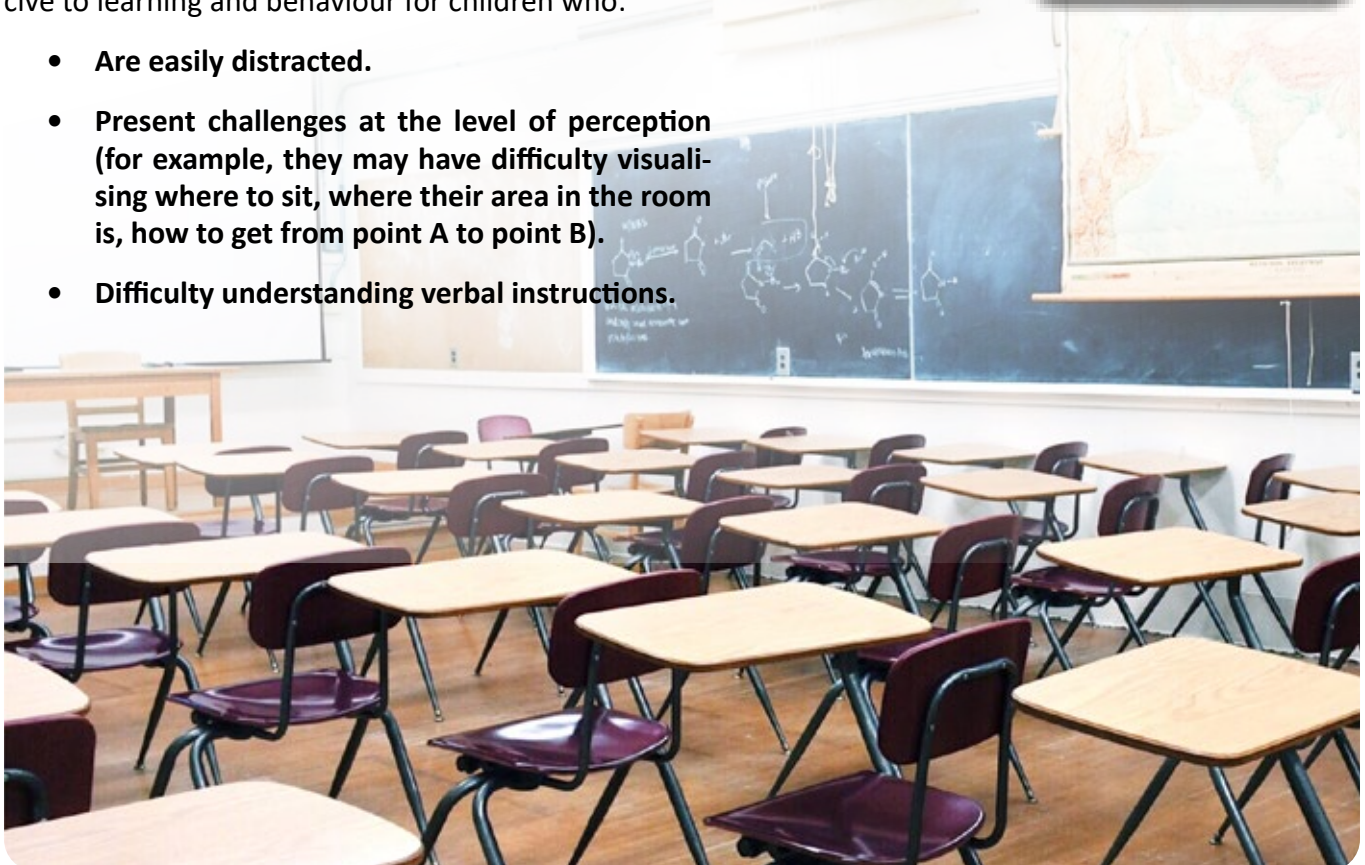
We share 5 tips for keeping the classroom space distraction free and organised:

1. KEEP MATERIALS OUT OF SIGHT WHEN NOT IN USE

Some children, such as those with Autism Spectrum Disorder, can become overwhelmed or over stimulated in the face of too much visual and tactile information so it is important to reduce clutter. In this sense it is important to

a. Determine a specific place for things (e.g. toys in a container, papers and pens in a drawer, etc.) Like en example in figure 1.

b. Keep material which may distract the child away from its environment.

c. In case there are visible containers on the classroom shelves, they should be camouflaged, so as not to distract the student, thus avoiding situations such as moving and taking away the materials.

d. Draw up and determine a timetable for students to fetch the materials or give direct and clear instructions for doing so. For students who have difficulty reading and/or understanding verbal language, use words and pictures to indicate what is intended, this will help the student to identify where, for example, they can fetch the toys or materials. Let us look at the example in figure 2.

Figure 1

Figure 2

2. REDUCE WHAT IS DISPLAYED ON THE WALLS

Children with this condition can often be easily distracted by the materials on display and/or decorations on the walls. In order to minimise distraction, it is important to take care to keep these decorations in one place in the classroom, rather than using the whole space. The reduction of visual stimulus is important for the stability of these children. Consider the example in figure 3.

Figure 3

3. DEFINING AREAS IN THE CLASSROOM OR LEARNING SPACE

This strategy is adopted in classroom environments where there are several spaces (reading space, science space, playful space, among others). In order to delimit these areas, professionals may use different coloured carpets, or even dividers with shelves with books or other materials.

A classroom environment with these characteristics benefits students who present the following characteristics

a. Who are easily distracted.

b. Difficulty in staying in a certain space of the classroom.

c. Difficulty in orienting themselves in the classroom.

The use of images or words to identify the spaces is essential.

Take as an example Figure 4, where the student's study space is identified.

Figure 4

4. MAKING A TIMETABLE (WRITTEN OR WITH PICTURES)

In order to organise how students will use the classroom space, it is important to draw up a timetable. With a timetable the student knows when he will be in a certain space.

Some students find it easier when they use mini-schedules, for example: first do the puzzle, then computer activity).

In order for children to know what activities they have completed, teachers can opt for a timetable where the different components are removed so that children know what parts have already been completed and what they still have to do (Figure 5).

Figure 5
Fonte: Fundación Puríssima Concepción Hermanas Hospitalarias

5. PERSONALISED DEFINITION OF THE SPECIFIC PLACE OF THE STUDENT

Many students have the need to have their specific place to develop a certain task. For example, a child who has difficulty staying in his/her designated area in the classroom may benefit from floor tape around his/her seat, so that he/she knows where he/she is expected to be.

Another way, is to define each student's area of the class using different coloured mats, making it easier to show where they need to be when needed, as shown in the example in figure 6.

Figure 6

We address some good practices to consider in the classroom context regardless of the difficulty the student presents. When talking about students with ASD, it is essential to mention more specific strategies.

A **warm and relaxing environment** is essential for students with autism. Creating this environment implies, for example, including books, comfortable blankets and some calming objects, such as:

a. Stability ball.

b. Swivel chairs (some classrooms are replacing traditional chairs with this alternative).

c. Suspended swing, or a trampoline.

Besides the objects mentioned, there is the possibility of including resting or self-regulation spaces aimed at students who need breaks throughout the day.

Nevertheless, sensory objects can also be included in classrooms. Incorporate sensory/fidget items, as shown in the example in figure 6, also in the break area, or allow students to use fidget objects as a way to self-regulate and provide well-being. It should be noted that students should have direct and clear guidance on how these objects are used in the classroom, thus avoiding moments of distraction.

Figure 7

Briefly, to maintain a **positive classroom environment**, we should consider the following points:

✔ Minimise classroom distractions.

✔ Keep the classroom space and materials organised.

✔ Establish a schedule of activities and spaces to be used in the classroom.

✔ Define the classroom spaces (computer, reading, and recreational spaces, among others).

✔ Maintain a calm and relaxing classroom environment

✔ Include swivel chairs, in order to allow movement.

✔ Include and allow the use of sensorial objects.

Figure 8

5.2.2 THE PLAYGROUND AND LUNCHROOM ENVIRONMENT

Playground and lunchtime are the least structured and therefore most difficult times of the day for a child with communication and organisational challenges. Figuring out how to keep busy and have fun in a playground, with no set rules, is the big challenge.

How can the school welcome these students, without segregating them into more isolated and quiet areas of the school? By creating specific signs and spaces that make it easy to interpret where they can go and what they will find. In the same way, in the canteen area, the area where the child sits may be visually signposted. The child should avoid having lunch during the busiest periods. You can choose a quiet place, within the dining area, in order to guarantee less hectic lunches.

Having a visual menu available at all times facilitates the student's choices and communication.

Besides the organisational and sensory issues, this is a time when deficits in communication and social skills become noticeable and very painful.

Lunchroom management and playground responsibilities are the responsibility of operational staff, and it is necessary to give these professionals some understanding of what autism is and the basic strategies that will make a difference for a student in the autistic setting.

It should be noted that in these spaces, fire alarms or certain bells or chimes may represent sensory violence for children with ASD.

DO NOT MAKE LOUD NOISES

5.3 PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES

Students with autism are challenged daily in several contexts, namely the educational one. It is important that educational professionals understand this disorder in order to better intervene and help these children to achieve their educational success. For this, it is essential to implement pedagogical strategies appropriate to the real learning needs of these students.

We consider the following pedagogical strategies to consider in the teaching-learning context:

5.3.1 LIMITING SENSORY STIMULATION

According to some studies, people with ASD experience sensory hyper-sensitivity, triggering unusual and excessive reactions. Classrooms can be hectic spaces, where the permanence of sensory stimuli can be quite disturbing for these children. Here, the teacher has an important role, not only in identifying the stimulus, but also in managing the sensory overload present, not only in the classroom, but also in the playground.   Thus, it is essential that the teacher gives, for example, some minutes to relax after the break, allow students to use the changing rooms when they are empty, among other important behaviours for the well-being of these students. Allowing students to leave five minutes early to avoid confusion in the corridors is also good practice.

5.3.2 USING THE APPLIED BEHAVIOUR ANALYSIS METHOD

Applied behaviour analysis, or ABA, is a therapy that contributes to teaching new skills as well as supporting the learning of the student with ASD. This intervention consists, not only in the acquisition of skills, but in the improvement of those that already exist. Furthermore, it also focuses on the attenuation of certain behaviours that compromise the social interaction of these students.

In an initial phase, it involves the identification of the behaviours and skills that need to be improved, for example communication, social interaction, among others. Subsequently an intervention based on behavioural strategies is outlined. This intervention is known as an assessment, before, during and after the interventions, something fundamental, not only to analyse the student's progress, but also to help in decisions regarding future interventions, in order to improve and promote the development of communication, social interaction, daily life activities, motor and academic skills.

This method can be applied by any health or educational professional, provided that they are certified to do so, i.e. the Behavior Analyst Certification Board - BACB (Nascimento & Souza, 2018).

Studies show that this long-term intervention brings benefits to students with this condition, namely in terms of behaviors, communication, and socialization (Rosa, 2022).

5.3.3 GIVING APPROPRIATE RESPONSES TO STUDENTS

Students with this condition have difficulties in communication and it is therefore essential to maintain a coherent, clear and direct speech when responding, asking questions or giving directions.

Care should be taken to avoid metaphorical and abstract language, as this will make it easier for the student to understand.

5.3.4 READING COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

Reading skills are essential to the development of lifelong learning for the subject. According to The Children's Reading Foundation, children with poor reading comprehension are more likely to have "low self--esteem and feelings of inadequacy", and may even be in danger of "attendance and dropout problems".

Reading difficulties are common among children with this condition, so teachers need to pay attention to the appropriateness of literacy strategies for these children. We highlight some strategies to develop and stimulate reading:

- Encourage interest in reading and books as early as possible.

- Encourage the family to develop reading activities in the home context.

- Teach the literacy process using various resources, namely technological ones.

- Provide summaries or pre-exposure to a new reading book before its initiation. Identify the story line, plot, main characters and setting with visuals - if possible - to situate the student to the book.

- Provide specific structure for questions when an answer is expected for comprehension. Use multiple choices, closed sentences, with a word bank, or starter answers. Considering that it could be very difficult to answer "John, how did the wolf find Grand-

ma's house?", A student with autism can show understanding by asking, "John, did the wolf find Grandma's house by crossing the river and...?"

- When giving choices, know how many choices are appropriate. Some may be able to choose from four choices, some from only two. Reducing the number of choices is a simple way to make a task simple for the student.

It is important to be aware that a high proportion of students with high-functioning ASD are adept at coding and use words, but may have significant problems with comprehension. Some students may be diagnosed with hyperlexia.

5.3.5 STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING AND IMPROVING WRITING

It is essential to recognise that writing involves expressive language skills, word retrieval, thought organisation and fine motor skills, which are often challenges for pupils with autism. Strategies to support each of these areas of need are often needed.

Some good practices when it comes to writing, according to Austism Speaks:

- Use visual resources to prompt language - pictures, word banks, etc.

- Start with loose sentences.

- Teach/develop descriptive vocabulary.

- Use organization model tools for all written assignments - webs, outlines, etc. As using these tools requires specific instruction and consistent, repeated use of them will likely result in greater independence and success.

- Consider using dictation, computer graphics programs to support your student. Consider an AlphaSmart keyboard as a support resource.

- Look for content, rather than staging or writing a play , knowing that writing may need to be assessed by alternative methods than those used for the class in general. For example, consider whether the student has answered the content questions rather than assessing only the writing.

5.3.6 CURRICULUM APPROACH STRATEGIES

The same source (Autism Speaks), suggests that in addressing curriculum issues and making academic modifications or accommodations, it is important to keep the following suggestions in mind:

- Define basic curriculum objectives and focus on them - for some students this may be as simple as one or two basic components within a unit.

- Focus on teaching less content, but teaching mastery and, where appropriate, fluency.

- Ensure students have classroom materials ahead of time.

- Pre-teach new vocabulary and relevant key concepts, focusing on those that build and are repeated across the curriculum

- Confirm that the information presented by the teacher is accessible to the student: know how much verbal information the student can process, consider ways of breaking down the information into manageable chunks, highlighting key points, providing outlines, study notes, etc.

- Use visual aids, where possible, to organise. enhance understanding and evaluate.

- Consider in homework, establishing a recording method, present set expectations, and consider possible schedule accommodations if necessary.

- When assessing, lower performance expectations in areas of difficulty for the student - to test knowledge concepts, replace essays with multiple choice or fill in the blank questions with word banks or replace paragraphs with webs that show relationships, etc.

- Teach and test regularly and in small chunks: check for understanding.

- Consider allowing more time or an alternative setting for tests.

- Review, repeat and move on when student demonstrates proficiency.

- If a student is having difficulty learning a concept or skill, rethink how the material is being presented.

IMPORTANT

It is essential to keep in mind that if a student with autism has an interest in an area, they may become the class expert on a particular topic. This can be a way to allow that student to shine, as well as provide an opportunity for motivation by using their particular area of interest to motivate flexibility or willingness to learn new subjects.

5.3.7 STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING MATHEMATICS

Recognising that this area often represents a wide variability in ability levels means that instruction is likely to need individualisation. A student who can perform two digit multiplication head on may have great difficulty in conceptualising negative numbers or in measurement. Word problems, in particular, are a notable area of struggle. Use the student's strong areas to build their self-confidence and motivation to work on challenging areas.

In addition:

- Similar to other subjects, break maths down into specific parts using visual and manipulative data.

- Use strategies like TOUCHMATH to help - This is a multi-sensory maths programme that makes critical maths concepts appealing and accessible for students who struggle to understand the content.

- Students with autism often learn patterns involved in a skill rather than its concepts.

- For skills that require accurate learning and execution, employ teaching strategies that ensure the skill is developed correctly from the beginning. As corrective teaching is generally less effective, unlearning bad habits can be much more difficult for students with autism.

Again, it is important to be conscious about learning and never forget that a child who spends months learning how to add and months learning how to subtract, may take months to learn how to look at the mixed addition / subtraction sign.

5.3.8 STRATEGIES FOR PE LESSONS

First, it is important to be aware of the student's motor part, timing, language and attention problems that may affect their performance and interest, and make appropriate accommodations. Do not exclude the student from participation in these classes.

Secondly, it is also essential to recognise that although the pupil may not be able to keep up with the pace of learning and activity of the whole class, they may be able to learn components of a sport or activity, and it always represents a valuable opportunity for social exercise.

5.3.9 STRATEGIES FOR MUSIC CLASSES

Did you know that many individuals with autism are strong in music, and you can use this fact to reward, motivate and teach?

A sense of rhythm and interest in music can be used to motivate a child to participate in an activity.

As music is processed in a different area of the brain than language, some individuals with limited language ability are able to sing, and song can be used to teach concepts or aid memory development.

5.3.10 STRATEGIES FOR ART CLASSES

Strong visual skills, a sense of visual perception or a unique perspective can often result in significant artistic ability in some individuals with autism. Others may have a special interest in colour, and be the class experts on colour combinations and application of colour wheel principles.

However, due to sensory/tactile issues, some students may have difficulty with the art class or certain art projects (e.g., clay on hands, smells of materials, etc.).

Good practice recommended by Autism Speaks:

- Pay attention to the presence or input of highly sensory stimuli that may affect the pupil, particularly in locker rooms and enclosed halls (echoes, whistles, pupils running and shouting, etc).

- Break tasks into small components and reward successes - a pupil learning to shoot hoops gains a valuable skill in return and an opportunity for social interaction with peers.

- Solicit input from special education in shaping appropriate locker room behavior, social conventions regarding privacy, using social narratives, etc.

5.3.11 STRATEGIES FOR INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) LESSONS

Even a very young child with autism can show a great affinity for technology, being able to immediately find the "on" button on any TV they encounter.

Visual acuity and various ways of storing/accessing information and creating thought processes often make some individuals with autism adept at using computers in the specifics of programming, sound operation, film production, etc.

A student in the autism picture may be a great asset in developing technological resources, but communication difficulties may prevent them from being able to explain how things work.

Try turning to a student with resolution problems and technical knowledge to make other tasks easier (substitute typing for writing, produce a video instead of writing a paper) or to motivate attention to other areas.
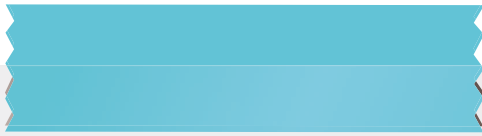
In conclusion, regardless of the pedagogical practices presented, **it is important that ALL teachers:**

✓ Be aware of the characteristics of autism as well as the specificities of each student, which must be considered, avoiding or managing situations.

✓ It is essential to have knowledge of the characteristics of autism in general and of the student in particular. Knowing their learning style, preferences, needs and strengths are promising measures and of double student-teacher benefit.

✓ Be aware of communication challenges with students in the autism setting - They should request guidelines for communication from the special education team (or multidisciplinary team), knowing that waiting time for an answer to a particular question, use of an alternative communication device, or use of communication strategies such as photo exchange may be necessary.

✓ Collaborate with special education staff to provide strategies for curriculum modification such as visual support, communication access, organizational tools, and directly teaching study skills (note taking, time management, etc.).

✓ Make sure activities such as outings, class presentations are taken care of ahead of time. Think of ways the student can be included, plan everything in advance with support staff.

✓ Field trips: use a social narrative to describe for the student, where the trip is, that they will be with the reference figure, what will happen and the timeline for the day. Where possible include images.

✓ Be aware of the student's need to develop daily living skills and promotion of ability and independence as much as possible. Explore opportunities for school staff to think creatively - Example: recess could be a great time for an intervention by the speech or occupational therapist, who could model strategies and create games that daily staff (and colleagues) could continue on days when they do not provide direct therapy.

✓ The operational technicians present on the playground should be in tune with the strategies modelled by the student's teachers and therapists and ask for their help with sensitive areas.

✓ Don't forget that friendly greetings, acceptance and patience can help make the child feel comfortable at school and small responsibilities can help them feel a sense of belonging to the school community.

Nevertheless, we should also consider the guidelines set out in the manual "Good practices in the inclusive classroom" of the Gil Eanes School Grouping (2020), in order to make educational practices in the classroom context, not only more flexible, but also more inclusive.

In this sense, **we share the following attitudes:**

✓ To expose, before the students, clear expectations and rules regarding behaviour.

✓ Share and install behaviour related to social etiquette (to be considered in situations where there is absence or difficulty at this level).

✓ Instilling in students knowledge about what they can and cannot do/say through exposure, as well as through the creation of 'make-believe' situations

✓ Always use positive reinforcement, in order to obtain a certain behaviour from the student.

✓ Promote group work.

✓ Give the student a break, or divert their attention to something they like, whenever they show anxiety, agitation or inappropriate behaviour.
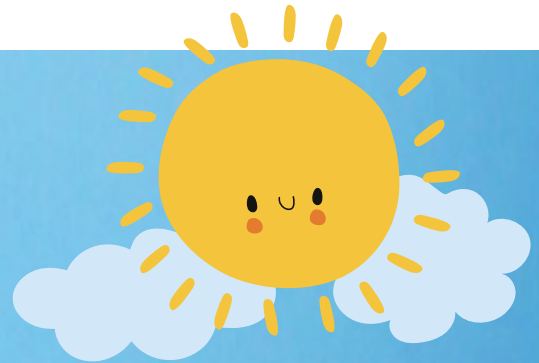
5.3.12 PRACTICES IN COMMON SPACES - PLAYGROUND AND DINING HALL

Follow the recommendations of Autism SPeaks:

- Start the lunch queue routine five minutes before other groups arrive.

- Reduce the number of choices.

- Visual programming can assist in establishing and continuing routine tasks by ensuring compliance (such as placing the tray and cutlery in the appropriate places) and managing behaviour.

- Visual instructions and cues can be employed to help the child make choices or know how to initiate or respond (e.g., "I would like chicken, please" hint card)

- Give positive instructions that allow incomplete language processing.

- Use descriptive praise to build desired behaviors (e.g., "I like the way you put the board in place!")

- Seek help to create settings for organising games in a small group setting and in a quieter playground. Use children with interest skills to motivate them to participate, as the social demands are enough for her to work with.

- For a pupil with particularly challenging behaviour, work with the education team to develop and employ a specific support element of the positive behaviour plan for needs in lunch /recreation.

- et up and explain the rules of playground games. If the playground is too much for a student, determine a quieter area for board or card games.

- Minimise the use of 'no' and 'stop'. Instead of 'Don't stand in the corridor' say to the student (who cannot hear 'no' or who doesn't know the correct place to stand), 'Please sit at the lunch table' .

- Allow peers who are a reference for the child the opportunity to be a lunch buddy.

- Work with the school education team to offer social narratives to help the student understand a rule or expectation. (e.g., why sitting too close is annoying to the peer, toilet or sink etiquette, etc.).

- Work with education staff to offer written or visual support for 'unwritten canteen or playground rules' and establishing social conventions.

- Consider colleagues as support for vulnerable pupils - it may be helpful to have the help of other staff to find a way of 'pairing' pupils.

REMENBER

It is important to be aware of the social vulnerability of this population of pupils and the propensity to be victims of aggressive behaviour.

REMENBER

Students with autism are not socially experienced and therefore if a student is being bullied or tortured into silence they are likely to react or respond..

REMENBER

The communication difficulties of a pupil with autism. Take other classmates to understand a situation before coming to a judgement regarding lack of behaviour, for example

" At school EVERYONE IS INVITED! "

As a way of mobilizing and empowering all the human resources of an educational community, we indicate the
10 Commandments of Help:

1. Know all your students well and how their disabilities manifest themselves.

2. Learn your students' perspectives, and realise that they have considerable difficulties.

3. Always look beyond the students' behaviors to determine the roles those behaviors may serve.

4. Don't underestimate your students' strengths or impose rules they can't meet.

5. Plague appropriate support in relation to the level of the students' skill development and behaviour.

6. Promote the pupil's skills as well as independence.

7. Actively seek information to assist your students in preparing and delivering the support they need to be successful.

8. Don't usurp the role of teachers.

9. Leave your ego at the door of home or school!

10. Perform your duties attentively, responsibly and respectfully at all times.

Source: How to Be a Para Pro by Diane Twachtman-Cullen

WE ALSO REMIND YOU THAT:

Para Pro Education and training can occur across the board, where students learn that differences and sensitivity are not related to a particular student.

Autism Awareness Month (April) offers many opportunities to focus on a class and learn more about the statistics and impact of autism.

This may also be a topic to bring to school assembly, or to include in classroom programs by matching the content with the age level of the students.

For younger children the message might be more about the word autism and how to treat people who may be different, with tolerance and understanding. Students from other school years could learn more about the specificities of this neurodevelopmental disorder, such as what they could do to help a classmate with ASD.

5. 4 CHALLENGING BEHAVIOURS AND BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

All behaviour is a form of communication. And in the case of challenging behaviours, these are no exception to the rule. There are in fact four main reasons for challenging behaviours:

1.	**2.**	**3.**	**4.**
they are trying to communicate something.	They want to see our reaction.	They are trying to balance sensory overload.	They are trying to do what they think will protect them.
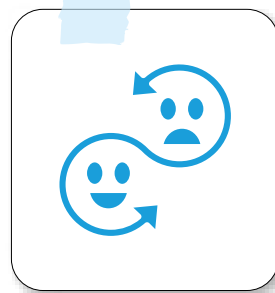
(Beat Autism)

According to Paro. S (2020) these are usually behaviours that should be identified and are not the fault of the child:

- "Stimming" self-stimulating behaviour is a type of repetitive behaviour. It includes: rocking, jumping, spinning, head banging, repeating words or sounds, staring at lights or spinning objects. It is usually harmless behaviour.

- Collapses, on the other hand, are usually caused by a complete loss of control when children are overwhelmed.

Whenever the behaviour occurs, it is important to consider the purpose or function of such behaviour. While some behaviours are biologically caused, many are learned over time and through experiences, and shaped by what happens before and after a behaviour occurs. Other behaviours may have started as a biological outcome - such as scratching - but may morph into something that presents a different function - such as scratching to get a teacher's attention. (Autism Speaks, 2012)

Challenging behaviour may reflect an individual's only way of coping with a difficulty at a particular time. Without appropriate intervention, these behaviours tend to persist and may worsen, creating an increasingly challenging cycle for the educational team/family.

Thus, promoting and teaching adaptive behaviour as early as possible is essential for long-term growth.

To develop best practice in this regard it is essential to empower ourselves as educators to learn and master the tools to address and reshape challenging behaviour.

Many parents and educators make adjustments to accommodate the behaviour of the child with ASD, but over time there are drifts from the patterns that become a 'new normal'. This can lead, for example, to families not isolating their children from certain habitual activities such as a trip to the supermarket. The same happens in a school environment, when, due to such behaviours, educators see the need not to allow the student to participate in certain activities, such as a study visit. It is important to stress that these attitudes on the part of educational agents compromise the child's opportunities for social interaction.

Challenging behaviours can have a significant impact on the individual in many ways, such as:

- Disrupting learning and, as a result, limiting long-term growth and development.

- Limiting experiences and excluding a person from many opportunities for growth throughout life, including play, attending traditional classrooms, leisure options and eventually work options, living conditions as well as the ability to be integrated into the community.

- Cause physical fatigue, pain, injury, especially when aggression and self-harm are involved.

- Compromise an individual's psychological state, resulting in depression, stress, anxiety and reduce self-confidence and self-esteem.

- Impair social relationships as well as long term interactions with siblings, parents, teachers and other reference figures.

- Reduce independence and choice.

When a person within the autism framework has two or more diagnosed conditions, we call it a comorbid condition or dual diagnosis. Challenging behaviours are common in individuals with dual diagnosis, and they may also happen to have another undiagnosed mental health condition.

According to Austism Speaks (2012), the most common challenging behaviours are:

INTERRUPTION occurs when an individual exhibits inappropriate behaviours that interfere with the function and flow of what is around them. Ex: the interruption of a lesson. These behaviours may include hitting, kicking or throwing objects, knocking things over, tearing things, yelling, crying or swearing.

EVASION refers to running away and not returning to the place a person has left. In autism, avoidance is often used to describe behaviours in which a person leaves a safe place, a carer or a supervised situation by locking themselves in, wandering or running away.

INCONTINENCE is, in general, the inability to control the elimination of faeces or urine. For some people, this can be a sign that there is difficulty recognising body signals before it is too late. Other times this behaviour manifests itself as a means of gaining attention or escaping an undesirable task or situation.

NON-COMPLIANCE is used to describe when an individual fails or refuses to follow another person's instructions, rules or wishes. Non-compliance can be passive, such as not following a direction, or active, such as whining/complaining, becoming aggressive with another or against oneself. It is worth remembering that non-compliance can be purposeful, but sometimes it can also result from lack of understanding, lack of motivation, fatigue or poor organisation, or motor coordination issues.

OBSESSIONS, COMPULSIONS AND RITUALS are often strong and irresistible urges that can result in a person finding it difficult to cooperate, cope with a change or be flexible and adjust. The compulsion surrounding obsessions and rituals can often lead to new challenging behaviours if stopped or prohibited.

> An obsession occurs when a person's thoughts or feelings are dominated by a particular idea, image or desire. For example, a person who only wants to talk about lifts.

A compulsion is the urge to do something in a particular way or in a particular way. For example, the need to put away all the pencils or toy cars.

The term ritual is used to describe a repetitive behaviour that the person seems to use in a systematic way, to calm themselves or avoid anxiety. For example, arranging all the pillows in a certain way before going to bed to sleep.

PHYSICAL AGGRESSION is an act of force that can cause harm to another person and can include hitting, biting, grabbing, pulling hair, slapping, kicking, pinching, scratching, pulling, pushing, headbutting or throwing things.

DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY includes behaviour in which belongings or property are damaged, or destroyed and can include breaking, throwing, scratching, tearing, disfiguring belongings - yours or other people's - among others.

SELF-HARM is the attempt or act of causing harm to one's own body. Self-harm can be present in a variety of behaviours, including head-banging, head-slapping, assaulting one's own body, hitting or slapping someone, pressing on the eyeball, biting oneself, squeezing wounds and pulling hair.

SELF-MUTILATION, such as cutting someone's skin, burning or breaking a bone, is less common in autism unless other psychiatric conditions co-occur.

SEXUAL INADEQUACY can take many forms in autism, and can be described as a lack of sexual inhibition or 'acting out' behaviour. Lack of impulse control and poor social understanding can result in actions of sexual impulses that people normally keep to themselves, such as sexual advances (offering), sexual touching, promiscuity, exposing someone's genitalia, masturbating in public, sexual moaning, obscene phone calls, or voyeurism (observing other people's intimacy).

Depending on the severity and circumstances, sexual inadequacy can generate or be considered sexual assault.
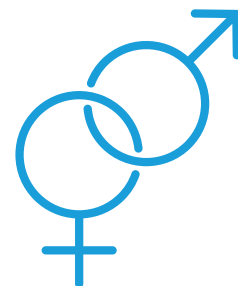
THREATENING BEHAVIOR includes physical actions that do not involve injury or actual contact with another person - holding a knife, for example - as well as explicit or written threats to people or property.

ANGER OR BOUTS OF RAGE describes an emotional outburst that may involve crying, shouting, screaming and stubborn or defiant behaviour. The person may lose control of their physical state and they may find it difficult to calm down, even if the desired outcome has been achieved.

VERBAL AGGRESSION usually involves the use of threats, bullying tactics, negative language, ultimatums and other destructive forms of communication.

5.4.1. CAUSES OF BEHAVIOUR

There are many possible physical causes and medical issues related to behaviour. Gathering information about pain and symptoms can be especially difficult in individuals with ASD, due to communication difficulties, variable responses to sensory stimuli and pain, even in people with good verbal skills but lack of self-awareness.

It is important that educational staff and families are aware of medical issues that commonly accompany autism or, more specifically, challenging behaviours. Treating these less obvious issues can often change behaviours.

Among the most well-known, Autism Speaks cites:

SEIZURE DISORDER or epilepsy occurs in up to a quarter of individuals with autism. The occasional seizures can be confusing, as some may occur at night but leave effects during the day, and others may appear in milder forms, such as furtive stares.

GASTROINTESTINAL COMPLAINTS OR DIGESTIVE DISORDERS such as reflux, stomach pain, constipation, intestinal pain and diarrhoea are frequently reported in autism.

SLEEP DISORDERS or disorders such as difficulty falling asleep, insomnia, sleep apnea (interrupted breathing) and staying awake at night are usually reported in autism.

SENSORY ISSUES should be taken into consideration, as many individuals with autism respond to sensory stimuli in altered ways. Sounds are louder, lights are brighter, words and visual stimuli cannot be grasped at the same time and the world is painful or confusing. It is also important to assess sensory stimuli. The child's vision and hearing should undergo specific tests, for example.

Any of these factors can alter a person's reactivity and generate a behavioural response.

ALLERGIES, IMMUNE DYSFUNCTIONS OR AUTOIMMUNE conditions can point to behavioural characteristics that vary according to exposure.

HEADACHES OR MIGRAINES can leave a person with autism pacing back and forth with pain that could easily be eliminated with a painkiller. The inability to report pain - even in more verbal individuals - can lead to discomfort that results in challenging behaviour.

> " I had a terrible stomach ache and didn't know what to do about it. So I wanted to run. I would run for miles just to try to get away from the pain. Of course, it was a small town and everyone knew me, so every now and then I would end up coming home. "

— RT, adult with autism

5.4.3 PERSON-CENTRED APPROACH

Looking at the person first - and not at their disability or behaviour - will be the most correct and useful approach, starting from the discovery of their strengths and their challenges. The person-centred approach will allow the educational team to find the tools and strategies that will be most useful for the child with ASD as an individual and for the professionals/family as reference educators.

In this sense, the family-centred approach is also important, so it is essential to consider the values, priorities and specific needs of the family of the student with ASD, namely:

- What does the family consider significant about their child?
- What are his/her strengths? What preferences and fears do they observe in him/her?
- How does the child respond to questions asked at home?

Ask all the questions that allow you to understand your student with ASD, their family dynamics, priorities, strengths, challenge/disruptive factors, etc.

Moving from the mindset that seeks to understand how a particular behaviour affects us to a mindset that wants to know what may be happening from the individual's perspective is an important step in finding ways to understand behaviour.

Understanding behaviour will allow the educator to support the replacement of maladaptive behaviour with functional skills.

Going back to the root of the behaviour is important to consider the possible purpose or function:

- How does this behaviour work for the person?
- Does she get something out of it?
- Does it get them out of something boring or difficult?
- Does it get them attention?
- Does this behaviour allow them to have some control over their life or environment?
- Does it help block out pain?
- What is good about the behaviour?
- Is this person trying to tell me something?

Analysing the behaviour is essential in order to choose the best strategy to support the improvement of the behaviour.
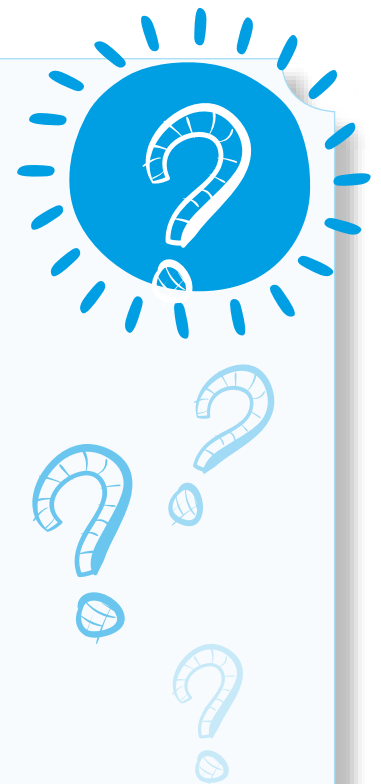
5.4.4 POSITIVE STRATEGIES FOR BEHAVIOUR IMPROVEMENT

Often, the right approach to controlling behaviour involves a combination of physical or mental health issues and the use of behavioural and educational supports to teach replacement and self-control skills. There is no recipe or magic solution, just a set of strategies that can often be helpful.

✓ Positive Behavioural Supports

The use of Positive Behavioural Supports is more than a politically correct approach to managing behaviour. Research shows that they are effective.

Positive strategies and an **intervention plan** can be developed using an educational team, usually in response to what is learned in a functional assessment of behaviour.

Another widely used methodology that serves as a basis for defining these positive behavioural supports is ABC Analysis, an approach to understanding behaviour by analysing the Antecedent (the cause), the Behaviour, and the Consequence (the outcome).

✓ Prioritisation

When there are several challenging behaviours, it is important to set priorities. It may be best to start with the target behaviours that are particularly dangerous, or the skills that can help improve situations in various behavioural scenarios.

It is important to set goals that are realistic and meaningful:

⚙ Start with small steps that can be developed over time. A non-verbal child is not prone to speaking full sentences, but if he learns to make a card asking for "a break" when he needs to leave his desk, it will allow him to leave without having to alter the classroom dynamic.

⚙ Being realistic in the beginning is key. This can help the school and family to realise that you are working for small, but significant changes in the lives of these children and, consequently, in the lives of their carers.

⚙ Being realistic also allows you to maintain positivity: to focus on progress towards a goal rather than perfection.

⚙ Goal-setting allows you to objectively measure progress towards a desired outcome.

⚙ Setting goals also allows the family to reflect on:

- "What behavioral changes would really represent the most improvement in our lives?"
- "What does it really matter to do?"

Ex: It may be more important to address a behavior like throwing things during a classroom activity than to address the person's tendency to get up during meals.(Targeting the Big Three cit in Autism Speaks, 2012)

Recognize that many skills take time to develop and that behavior changes require ongoing supports to be successful. In some cases, especially when recurrently ignoring a behavior that is used to "work" with your student/child, the behavior may become more intense or more frequent before it improves.

In liaison with the special education team try to keep good records and monitor progress and responses to intervention so they know if the plan is effective.

✓ Aspects to consider in the transition between educational environments

As we saw above, changing the environment can often reduce behavioural episodes. Expand worthwhile situations, relationships, places and opportunities.

If possible, try to adjust or avoid situations that provoke the challenging behaviour. Incorporate ways to reduce frustration and anxiety and increase understanding.

In addition to the specific recommendations about the environment and the strategies already suggested, we stress the importance of these for the behavioural issue:

- ☼ Inform transitions and change: recognise that change can be extremely unsettling, especially when it is unexpected.

- ☼ Grouping colleagues or staff appropriately for challenging activities or periods: some people are calmer than others in certain situations.

✓ Building a sense of pride in personal achievements and responsibility.

These types of strategies will help reduce anxiety and reactivity that results in aggression or other behaviours:

- ☼ **Celebrate and build energy and successes:** tell the student what they do well and what you like them to do. Having a sense of ability often promotes interest and motivation. Strive to give positive feedback much more often than any correction or negative feedback. *" you did a great job of putting the dishes in the sink".*

- ☼ **Respect and listen to the student:** you may have to look at the things the child tells you, verbally or through their choices and actions. Ex: *"You are still sitting on that side of the table. Is the sun hitting your eyes?*

- ☼ **Confirm the student's concerns and emotions:** don't dismiss their fears or say they don't need to worry. His emotions are very real. Help give language to what he is feeling. Ex: "*I know you don't like spiders. I can see that you are very scared right now." "I can see that you are angry because our plans have changed..."*

- ☼ **Provide clear expectations for behaviour:** Show or tell what you expect the student to use visual aids, photographs or video models. The Talk-Show-Do technique is a great way to teach new skills.

- ☼ **Set the student up for educational success:** help. Accept a one-word response rather than demanding a whole sentence.

- ⚙ **Ignore challenging behaviour:** do your best to prevent challenging behaviour from serving as a way to communicate or win. It may be difficult, but it is effective in the long run. Don't allow the student's shouting, to get them what they want. Behaviours can get worse before they start to improve. Be firm! Make sure that all members of the educational team are consistent in this approach and that it is combined with other positive strategies.

- ⚙ **Alternate tasks:** Do something that is fun, motivating or that your student is good at. Then try something difficult. He will be less inclined to give up or get agitated if he is already in a positive setting.

- ⚙ **Offer choices, but within parameters:** You can have control over the choices you offer. *"Do you want to read the story first or paint?"*

- ⚙ **Provide access to breaks:** teach the student to ask for a break when he needs to pull himself together (for example, use a PECS card that represents "break"). Make sure you provide the break when he asks for it so that he learns to rely on this option and doesn't have to resort to challenging behaviours.

- ⚙ **Promote the use of a safe, quiet place:** Teach him to recognize when he needs to go there. This is a positive strategy, not a punishment.

- ⚙ **Establish reinforcement systems:** Use simple, predictable processes that reward your student for exhibiting the desired behavior. Surprise them by doing something good and reward them verbally and with activities, objects or "payoffs. *You earned a trip to the playground with me!"*

- ⚙ **Set aside times and a place for him to do what he wants:** it is important to provide these options with school being such a noisy and populated space.

- ⚙ **Reward flexibility and self-control:** *"I know you wanted to go to the pool today and that it was boring because the teacher was absent. For accepting this change of plans, let's take some time in the sensory room or sandbox?!*

- ⚙ **Choose your battles:** Strive for balance. Focus on the behaviours and skills that are most essential. Make sure you include positive feedback and intersperse opportunities for success and fun. Be resilient. Celebrate the fun and the good things!

- ⚙ **Use positive/proactive language:** use language that describes what you want the individual to do. Ex: *"I love the way you used the colours"*

Research shows that positive, reinforcement-based strategies are most effective in creating long-term behavioural change. However, it is also important to have an immediate response to a behaviour in order to maintain safety or minimise confusion. Planning ahead and anticipating the type of possible situations is important.

MORE REACTIVE STRATEGIES

⚙ **Ignoring the behaviour (extinction)** is a commonly used strategy when the behaviour is used for attention and is moderate or non-threatening. Ignoring difficult behaviour means not giving in to the behaviour you are trying to eliminate.

⚙ **Redirection,** which is often aided with visual elements, may involve redirecting to an appropriate behaviour or response and is usually associated with positive strategies.

⚙ **Removal of a situation or effort** using a moment of isolation is often used to calm the person. Contrary to what most people believe, isolating a child is not about leaving him sitting in a chair for a few minutes. Isolation causes the child to lose access to cool and fun things as a result of problematic behaviour, usually by removing them from the environment that has those cool and fun things. Isolation can only occur when the individual is engaged in the activity. That is, if nothing fun was happening before the isolation, it will simply be removing the person from a non-stimulating and non-engaging environment to one of the same kind.(Autism Speaks, 2012)

Certain behaviours (those that are dangerous or harmful) are harder to ignore and sometimes need to be redirected or blocked (e.g. putting a pillow near the child's head so they don't hurt themselves while hitting), even while the adult is trying hard not to let the behaviour 'win'.

5.4.5 CRISIS SITUATIONS

Generally, when the child is involved in the active and disruptive state of a behaviour, such as an angry outburst or aggression, **the primary focus should be directed towards the safety of the child and those around the child.**

It is important to remember that when a child is in full breakdown mode, he or she is not able to reason, be redirected or learn replacement skills. However, this level of agitation usually does not start from nothing.

It is possible, as an educator, to learn skills that help you to anticipate and control an escalating behavioural situation that seems to be heading for a breakdown.

Preparation and strategies for dealing with these situations and staying calm during them are key steps and therefore it is important that the educational team and the family develop a crisis plan together. According to Autism Speaks (2012), a well-designed plan will include:

✓ Defined events or signs that indicate a crisis situation may develop.

✓ Tools and strategies to keep the person and anyone nearby safe in any setting (school, home, community).

✓ Intervention steps and procedures that prove the decrease in behaviour and are associated at each level with increasing levels of agitation.

✓ List of things to do and NOT to do that are specific to the individual's history, fears and needs.

✓ Training/practical training for carers and education staff.

✓ Data collection and monitoring for ongoing reassessment of the effectiveness of the plan.

✓ Knowledge of the best prepared facility in case a hospitalisation or emergency visit is required.

HOW TO CALM AN ESCALATING BEHAVIOUR SITUATION

➤ Be aware of warning signs.

➤ Try to reduce stressors by removing distracting elements, offering a calming activity or object, or moving to a calmer space.

➤ Remain calm, as the person's behaviour is likely to arouse emotions in you.

➤ Be gentle and patient.

➤ Give the individual space.

➤ Give clear instructions and use simple language.

➤ Focus on getting the person back to a calm and stable state by providing a few minutes in a quiet, relaxing activity.

➤ Praise attempts at self-control and the use of strategies such as deep breathing.

➤ Discuss the situation or teach alternative and more appropriate responses once the person can become calm.

➤ Do a recapitulation with the person and the educational team so that everyone is prepared for further recognition of self-control signs and strategies in future situations.

KEEP CALM

IN THE MIDST OF A CRISIS SITUATION

1. **Remain as calm as possible**

2. **Assess the gravity of the situation**

3. **Follow the crisis plan and focus on safety**

4. **Determine who to contact.**
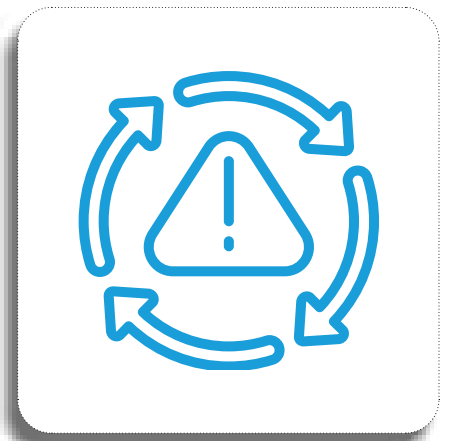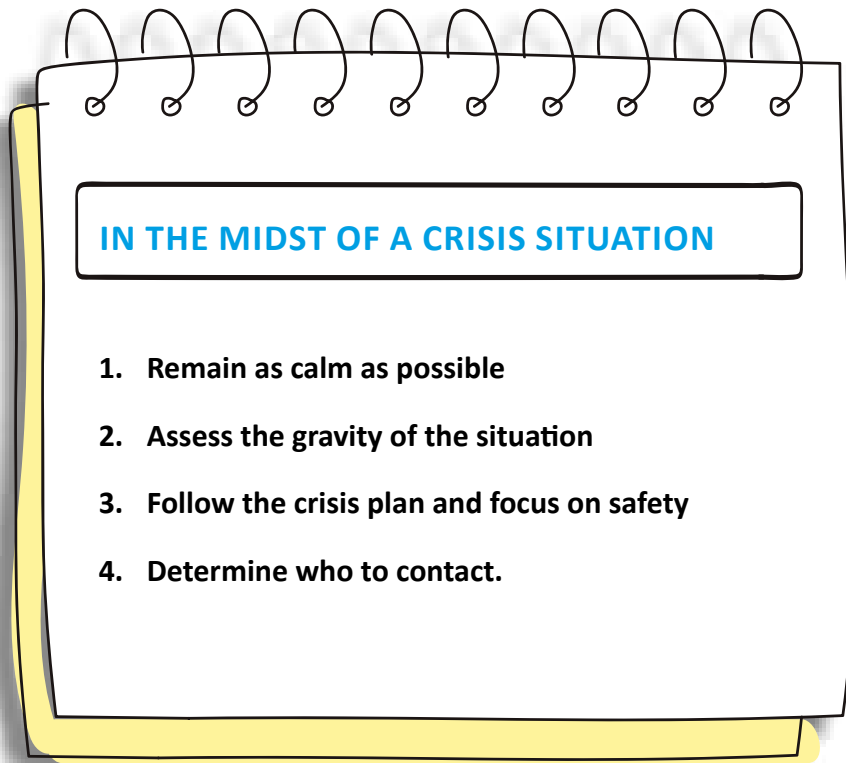
Often, when serious and dangerous behaviors pose a risk of physical harm to the person or others nearby, it is necessary to use physical restraints or isolation to maintain safety.

Physical restraints include immobilising or reducing a person's ability to move their arms, legs, body or head freely.

Isolation (placing the person for a few moments in a room, alone, to 'calm down') is often used in schools and other group settings. Isolation can serve as a quick alternative to an immediate threat, but in the long term it is not a solution to the behaviour itself, especially if the function of the behaviour is to escape or avoid something.

It is important to note that while restraints and isolation may serve to maintain safety, they are interventions that should be used as a last resort and only when alternative, less restrictive interventions are not effective, feasible or safe.

Misuse of these techniques can have serious physical and emotional consequences. Parents and caregivers should seek and receive professional guidance and training on: positive behavioral interventions and supports, crisis prevention, and safe implementation of restraint and seclusion techniques when necessary.

5.5 EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

The learning characteristics of children with Autism Spectrum Disorders are variable. The use of teaching resources and methods will help children with Autism Spectrum Disorders to access all aspects of the curriculum. Below are some of the most effective resources for autism and inclusive strategies to help these children feel included in the classroom setting.

5.5.1 UNIVERSAL THINKING FRAMEWORK:

This instructional toolkit, expressed in the example in Figure 7 and 8, provides teachers and children with an organised language for learning. The symbols and simple descriptions of learning actions enable children of all ages to access the curriculum more effectively.

Figure 7

Figure 8

5.5.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF COLOURING

Studies on Autism Spectrum Disorder indicate that colouring in activities have been shown to be a key exercise in calming and focusing children. Colouring exercises such as those in figure 9 and 10 are options to consider.

Figure 9

Figure 10

5.5.3 FIDGET TOYS

Fidget toys, like the example in image 11, are a popular sensory resource to help children with Autism Spectrum Disorder and other sensory processing disorders stay focused and calm.

Teachers can buy ready-made fidget toys for their classroom or

Figure 11

use ones they have co-developed with their students. This toy can relax the child's mind and, in doing so, improve their working memory and executive functioning skills.

5.5.4 EMOTION CARDS

These cards, like the ones in figure 12, are printable for children with this neurodevelopmental disorder and can help them recognize various emotions in others and in themselves.

Sample activity: The teacher shuffles the emotion cards. Then show each card to the students and see if they can identify the emotion without looking at the text. If they are unable to recognize the emotion, the teacher shows the word and explains the emotion shown. For example, if the card is "happy", the teacher could say: "When someone is happy, they can express it by smiling or laughing out loud".

5.5.5 GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS

Visual tools such as mind maps and Venn diagrams, such as those shown in figures 13 and 14, which facilitate students to develop new ideas and capture their thoughts.

Figure 12
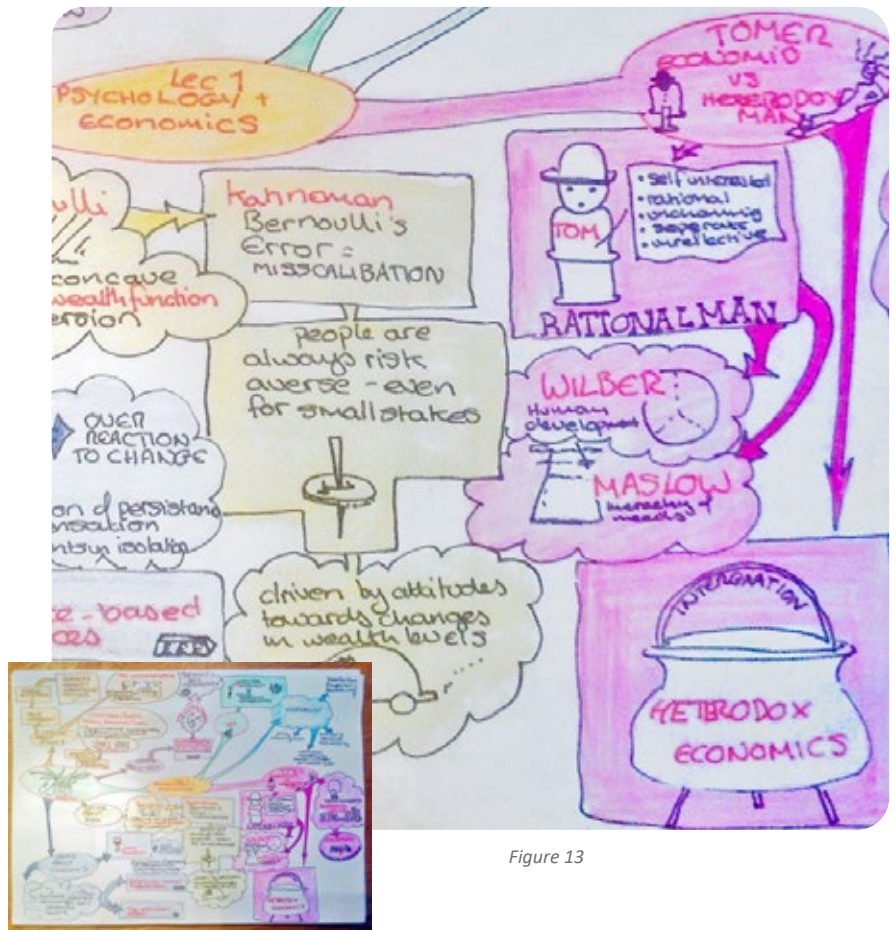
Figure 13

5.5.6 SENSORY BOXES

These boxes are useful for children with ASD for two reasons:

a. They encourage independent play providing educational benefits to the pupil.

b. They provide an accessible sensory experience for students with this condition.

Sensory boxes, such as the example shown in Figure 14 and 15, provide a great opportunity for children with ASD to learn and explore through tactile play.

Figure 14

Figure 15

APPENDIX 1 - I HAVE A STUDENT WITH AUTISM IN MY CLASSROOM. WHAT NOW?

SURVIVAL GUIDE

STEP 1

In Primary 1, if I am the class teacher: I should meet with parents and collect concrete information from parents about what their child likes and what their child doesn't like, to determine what should be avoided and what can be done to motivate/control more disruptive behaviour.

In the remaining cycles: if I am the class director, I should meet with parents and collect concrete information about what the child likes and dislikes, to determine what should be avoided and what can be done to motivate/control more disruptive behaviour. I should then send this information to all teachers of the class council and to all teaching assistants (in the 2nd cycle, 3rd cycle and secondary, it can be done through the head of the assistants).

NOTE: *this work should be done in conjunction with the teacher of Inclusive Education.*

OBSERVATIONS:

- There are behaviours from the teacher, from the teaching assistants and from the classmates that may generate uncontrolled moments on behalf of the student with autism. These should be avoided and can only be avoided if the school community knows which behaviours they are. No one knows the child better than the parents and it is only through the parents that we can reach the student more quickly. On the other hand, there are behaviours which calm them down in stressful situations. With the help of the parents we will know more quickly what they are and we can apply them when necessary.

- It's essential that the teachers' aides are informed as they are a fundamental part of success. In fact, the teachers' aides often spend more time with these students than the teacher/s.

STEP 2

As the class teacher or class director, I should seek reliable information about this spectrum and its main characteristics. Also here I can shorten the way and ask the Inclusive Education teacher for help. From here, I highlight two situations:

Provide training for teachers and assistants: a pamphlet should be produced, or a search for what has already been done by Autism Associations and make it available at school. these associations should ask for help with training. These associations are specialized in the spectrum, often created by parents of children with Autism.

Work in class for the inclusion of this classmate: with autism associations, a video and activities appropriate to the age of the students in question should be sought to raise awareness of the inclusion of the student with autism. Classmates should be aware of the limitations and potentialities of this classmate. they should know what behaviours to avoid and what behaviours to promote with this classmate. a peer tutor can/should be appointed for the student, who should be a colleague with a profile, who volunteers. He/she cannot be nominated without having a will or a profile.

OBSERVATIONS:

- In the previous points the parents' testimony can be requested, if they are capable of it. (There are parents who are not capable, because they are still living their state of denial, mourning, revolt. They should accept and understand themselves).

WHAT TO AVOID IN GENERAL WITH A STUDENT WITH AUTISM

☒ Do not treat the student by the diminutive of his name. He should be treated as the rest of the students. The diminutive name shows pity and coitus, which hurts the parents very much.

☒ Touch should be avoided, especially grabbing or holding in crisis or out of control situations.

☒ All situations should be explained and any change in routine should be anticipated. For example, if the following day there will be no music lesson because there is a trip to the library, the student should have this information in his possession in advance. They cannot only know at the moment, as this may trigger disruptive behaviour, bringing out stereotypes (involuntary movements they cannot control).

☒ They should be given the opportunity to replace books and notebooks with tablets and computers. They usually have impaired fine motor skills (they hate writing) and are very good at technology, and are highly motivated to use it.

☒ They should favour teaching through the use of images: videos, power points, interactive games. They have a fantastic visual memory.

☒ The contents should be simplified and schematized.

☒ Whenever possible, the subject should be taught using elements from the daily life of these students. For example, if I want to teach the subject, the predicate, the verb, the direct complement, and the student is called Luís and loves trains, I can put the sentence: Luís loves trains. The fact that the sentence is about oneself, about one's own reality, increases motivation and understanding.

☒ All the contents that are taught should have two phases: the presentation in video or power point, and then activities in which the apprehension is verified.

☒ The worksheets should be small. Never put several exercises on the same sheet. It makes visual confusion/distraction and demotivates the student by the fact that he sees at once that he has a lot of work to do.

☒ Pay attention to noises and sounds. If possible, place the student with headphones and he himself regulates the volume. If the audio is only for the rest of the class, talk to the parents about the possibility of the student always having ear protectors in his backpack (they are a kind of earphones that cut the sound).

☒ For these students, homework cannot be dictated. The teacher must ensure, himself, or supervise, that the record is made.

☒ The student's autonomy should be worked to the maximum and he should not let his colleagues do everything for him because they consider him incapable. If we do not teach him to do, if we do not let him try, he will never succeed. (This should be explained to the class).

ATTENTION:

- It is not a recipe. All students on the autism spectrum are different. You may find a student with autism who loves to receive and give cuddles, for example.

- We should never try to change the student. The school must mould itself to him.

- We should always believe that they are capable, because they are. However, they can only show it if we give them the possibility to do it through a different pedagogical path.

APPENDIX 2

Pamphlet to support the class/school community information

IT IS IMPORTANT

Look at the person first rather than their behaviour or disability.

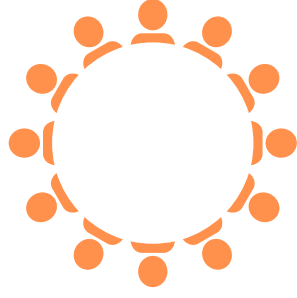Discover their strengths and their challenges.

WHAT NOT TO DO

- Calling a person by their diminutive name.
- Touching and holding without knowing whether the person will tolerate it.
- Not explaining that something is going to change in the face of routine.
- Not asking to do several things at once.
- Do not do things for the person. Stimulate the person's autonomy.

DID YOU KNOW THAT?

Albert Einstein
Bill Gates
Isaac Newton
Vicent Van Gogh
Steven Spielberg
Leonardo Da Vinci

were autistic?
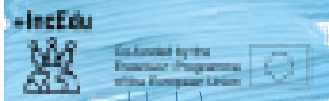
WE ARE ALL INVOLVED

All children matter and they really matter!

School is for each and every one.

UNESCO

inc4edu@gmail.com
https://edupa.pt/projeto-incedu/
facebook.com/Projeto Educação Inclusiva
incedu_inclusiveeducation

+IncEdu

AUTISM

Knowing to understand

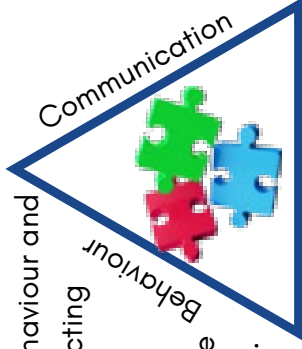Flyer available to print (front and back).

WHAT IS IT?

Autism is not a disease! It is the most common developmental disorder in the world.

There is no one cause: for genetic reasons, biological and environmental factors the brain does not develop according to the standard.

It is a severe disorder of social interaction and communication, which conditions the child's behaviour and attitudes, affecting affecting their way of relating to with others and to and to get involved in the surrounding environment.

Behaviour — Communication — Social interaction

KNOW MORE...

Autism is 4 times more frequent in boys than in girls.

It manifests itself between the ages of 18 months and 3 years.

It is a syndrome and, as such, appears on a spectrum with several levels.

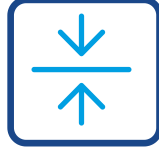There is no cure for autism. However, some children make significant progress.

CHARACTERISTICS

Repeats words, phrases or sounds hears ("echolalia").

Avoids physical contact and, often, eye contact as well.
Reveals difficulty in relating to other people.

Has a special interest in aligning objects.
Fixation on objects or themes.

Difficulty interpreting facial expressions.

Stereotyping/repetitive movements. Insists on repetition and resists routine change.

Some motor incoordination. Perceived hyperactivity or extreme inactivity.

No sense of danger.
Difficulty in expressing needs.

Apparent insensitivity to pain.
BUT sensory hypersensitivity (noise, smell, light).

WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO KNOW

Children in the autism spectrum often have challenging behaviours.

What are the child's potential reasons for this?

Trying to communicate | See reactions | Balancing emotional overload | Self-protection

HOW CAN I HELP?

Keep an eye out for warning signs.

Decreases/removes everything that causes stress and distraction by offering an activity or object that transmits calm.

Be kind and patient. Give the person space.

Gives clear instructions to the person and speaks simply.

KEEP CALM
Stay calm.
The person's behavior will also arouse emotions in you.

AUTISM

Knowing to understand

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incedu_inclusiveducation

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Communication

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KEEP CALM

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

THE AUTRAIN PLATFORM is the first multipurpose open online resource that will act as a European framework for information and courses related to active social inclusion in the daily lives of people with ASD. As mentioned, the AuTrain platform is the only resource that can be used for multiple purposes. Firstly, to obtain general information about ASD, namely characteristics, etiology, or interaction and communication, in situations of daily life, with people with ASD. Second, to implement a training course that fits modern standards of education and vocational training in blended learning environments.

For this reason, the AuTrain Platform can establish itself as a European resource and a joint centralizing platform for theoretical and practical work in the area of ASD and the social inclusion of people with ASD.

SERCRI was born from a project, initially called "Ser Criança", aimed at the sale of materials related to Occupational Therapy and Sensory Integration, a project initiated by pediatric occupational therapist Ana Teixeira, specialized in sensory integration. SerCri is currently a company that provides a platform with an online store for the purchase of these products, facilitating access and purchase for parents, teachers, educators, therapists, among others.

The other products are often recommended for children with certain types of difficulties, such as difficulties with self-regulation, fine motor skills, eating, etc. In this way, we provide access to solutions that allow adapting the way certain tasks are performed or training/facilitating the development of different skills, with the ultimate goal of promoting the child's participation and performance in various activities/occupations of their daily life. The range of products available are frequently used by Occupational Therapists in their clinical practice and, often, also recommended to parents, teachers and educators.

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"Good readings!"

+ INCLUSIVE EDUCATION:
FROM REFLECTION TO ACTION

[GOOD PRACTICES MANUAL]

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN PRACTICE

LEARNERS WITH
SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITIES
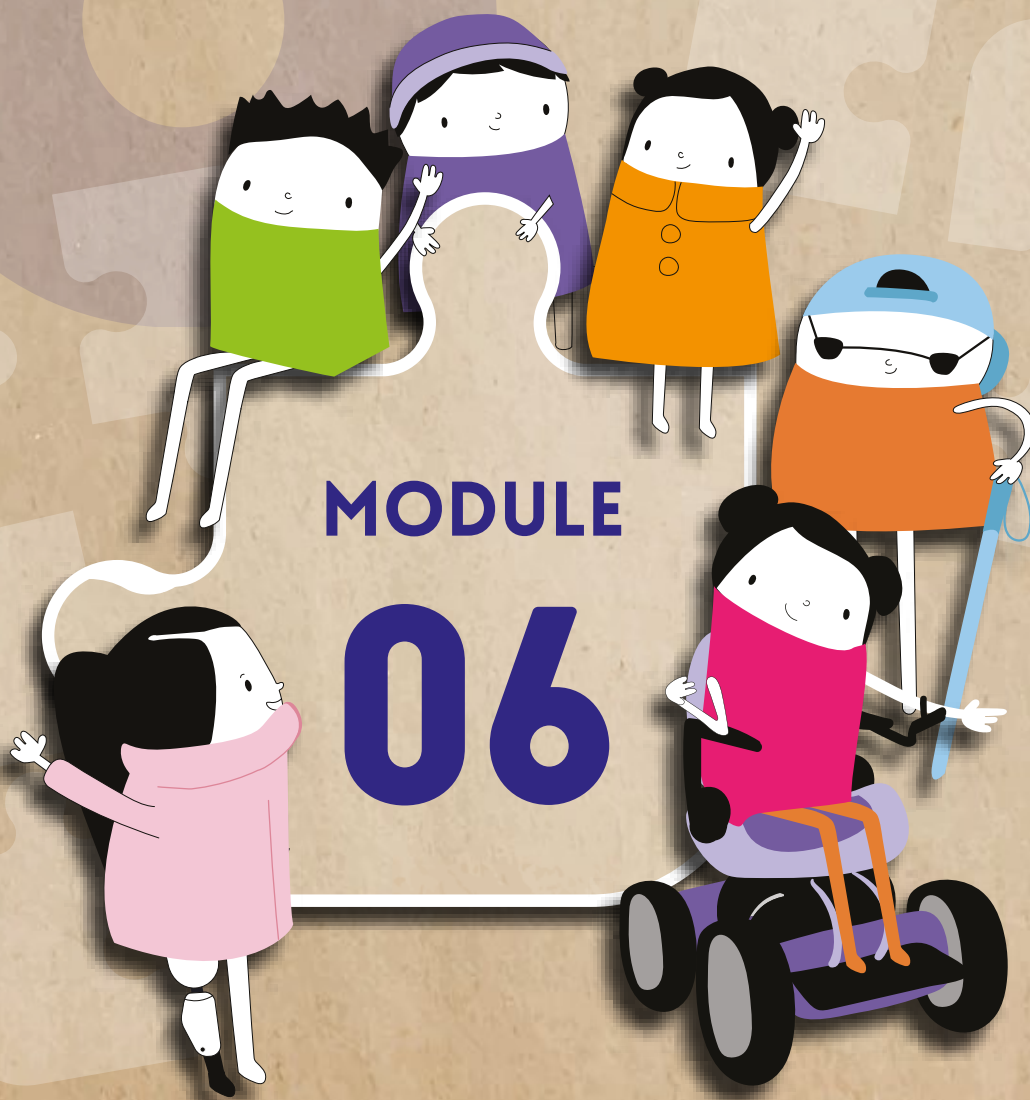
MODULE

06

MODULE 6

> " *When I read, I only hear what I am reading and am unable to remember the visual image of the written word* "

Albert Einstein

6.1 KNOWING TO UNDERSTAND SPECIFIC LEARNING DISORDERS (DYSLEXIA. DYSGRAPHIA. DYSMORGRAPHY. DYSCALCULIA)

Specific Learning Disorders is the name used to describe difficulties in the acquisition of skills in reading, writing, arithmetic or logical-mathematical reasoning.

According to Correia (2011), adding the term 'specific' is intended to clarify and avoiduncertain interpretations regarding this disorder.

> *Specific learning difficulties related to the way an individual processes information - receives, integrates, retains and expresses it - taking account of his or her abilities and achievements as a whole. Specific learning difficulties may thus manifest themselves in the areas of speech, reading, writing, mathematics and/or problem solving, involving deficits in memory, perceptual, motor, language, thinking and/or metacognitive problems. These difficulties, which do not result from sensory deprivation, mental impairment, motor problems, attention deficit, emotional or social disorders, although there is the possibility of these occurring concomitantly, may also change the way the individual interacts with the surrounding environment*
> *(Correia, 2009, p. 99)*

The first signs of this difficulty appear at an early age in the subject's development. These are not attributed to other difficulties, such as hearing impairment. The clinical diagnosis of this disorder has as a starting point, not only the analysis of the child's clinical history, through psycho-pedagogical reports, but also by the responses obtained through the interventions, considering, according to the DMS-5, the following criteria:

1. Presentation of continuous difficulties, not only in the use, but also in the acquisition of language in its different domains, for example at the level of speech, writing or sign language. These difficulties derive from a set of deficits in comprehension and production, namely

a. **Limitation in sentence construction, which is reflected in the "ability to join words and word endings together to form sentences based on grammatical and morphological rules".**

b. **Difficulty at the speech level, which is reflected in the ability to develop a conversation, explain or describe something, due to the subject's difficulty in using vocabulary and putting sentences together.**

2. The subjects' linguistic capacities are not developed according to their agerevealing functional limitations in terms of communication. This reality has repercussions at social, academic and professional levels.

COMORBIDITIES

In addition to problems in learning, reading, writing and mathematics, children with ASD have a wide variety of characteristics and problems, which may appear separately or together (Ribeiro, A. 2023).

In this document (Ribeiro, A. (2023) Guide for parents of children with dyslexia), the author Vítor Cruz (2009) is quoted as listing the ten most commonly reported characteristics according to their frequency:

1. Hyperactivity.

2. Perceptive-motor problems.

3. Emotional instability (sudden emotional outbursts without obvious cause).

4. General coordination deficits (clumsiness and poor motor coordination).

5. Attention disorders (short attention spans, distractibility, perseveration).

6. Impulsiveness.

7. Memory and thought disorders.

8. "Specific learning difficulties" (reading, writing, spelling and arithmetic).

9. Hearing and speech disorders.

10. Diffuse neurological signs such as electroencephalographic irregularities.

The existence of specific learning disorders does not exclude others. This is what we call comorbidity. It is important when assessing dyslexia to consider the possibility of other associated disorders which may affect language, behaviour, communication or learning and which impact school performance.

Emotional and behavioural problems are not the main cause of learning difficulties. We should not confuse the psychological repercussions derived from specific learning disorders. It is also possible for a learning problem to be caused by emotional problems, but the opposite is more common, especially if the difficulty is not diagnosed or treated in time, leading to frustration and anxiety in the child.

Although Specific Learning Disorders cover a range of abilities, in this guide we will focus on difficulties in the acquisition of reading and writing, called Dyslexia

6.2. DYSLEXIA

Dyslexia is a specific learning disability of neurobiological and genetic origin. It is characterised by difficulty not only in word recognition but also in reading, writing and decoding resulting from a deficit in the phonological process of language. This difficulty affects students with normal intellectual ability who do not manifest any sensory problems (e.g. hearing impairment).

Currently, according to a definition accepted by the vast majority of the scientific community and adopted by the International Dyslexia Association (2003), it is considered:

"Dyslexia is a specific learning disability, of neurobiological origin. It is characterised by difficulties in word correction and/or fluency in reading and by poor reading and spelling skills. These difficulties result from a phonological deficit, unexpected in relation to the other cognitive abilities and educational conditions. Secondary difficulties may arise in reading comprehension, reduced reading experience that may impede the development of vocabulary and general knowledge."

According to the author Angelina Ribeiro (2023) this definition suggests some comments:

1. Firstly, this is a definition by exclusion, in which what is in deficit is further specified rather than defining its intrinsic properties.

2. Secondly, the fact that dyslexia is defined as a reading disorder. Infact, some authors have pointed out, there are two main sets of the process which contribute to the ability to read, i.e. to understand written text:

    • the processes of identifying written words, specific to reading.

    • comprehension processes, not specific to reading, since they are mobilised for both oral and written comprehension.

Increasingly, authors consider that in order to distinguish specific deficits from more general deficits which may affect listening or reading comprehension, it is necessary to define dyslexia as a disorder in the identification of written words.

3. Thirdly, the separation between specific reading disorders and specific writing disorders is inseparable. The literature on this subject shows the ambiguity that difficulties in identifying written words are systematically associated with disorders in their production, dysorthographies. Research shows that children with dyslexia manage to more or less master reading over time but have problems with spelling. This can be explained by the (greater) complexity of producing written words compared to recognising written words.

4. Fourthly, the fact that it excludes from this definition individuals whose intellectual level is below average is debatable. There is no proof that the difficulties in identifying and producing written words encountered by people with intellectual disabilities are any different from those encountered by people of average intelligence.

It is therefore plausible that certain children, adolescents or adults have both a cognitive deficit and difficulties in reading and writing,and these diagnoses are currently mutually exclusive (Sprenger-Charolles&Colé, 2006 cit in Ribeiro, 2023).

The author concludes that, in view of the above, the definition of dyslexia is likely to evolve further in the coming years as knowledge advances.
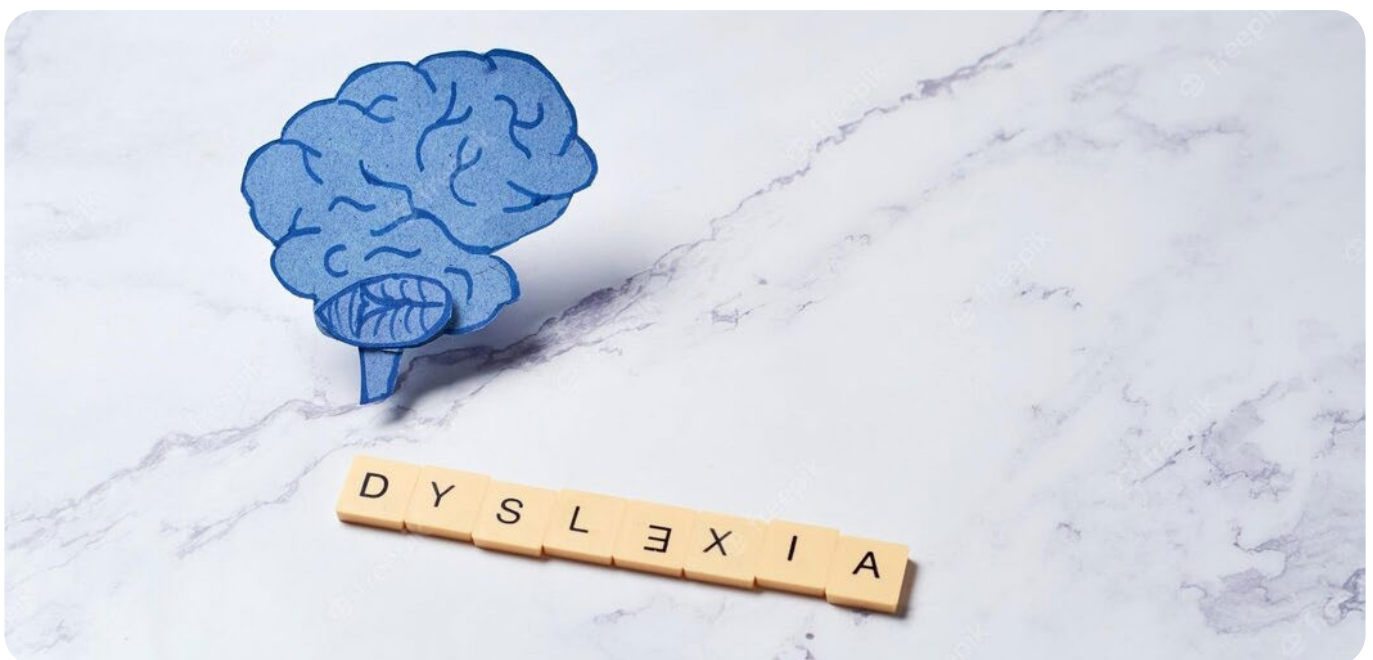
6.2.1 PRINCIPAL SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

According to the DSM 5 (2013), there is a set of symptoms that may indicate a diagnosis of Dyslexia. In this sense, we present a set of important signs namely:

1. Evidence, over a period of at least 6 months, of difficulties in the development and acquisition of learning as well as in the application of school skills, regardless of whether the student has benefited from intervention or not. Manifestation of at least one of the following difficulties:

   • Limited, or no, word reading accuracy.

   • Conditioned reading speed and fluency, this includes slow and strained reading.

   • Difficulty understanding what is read.
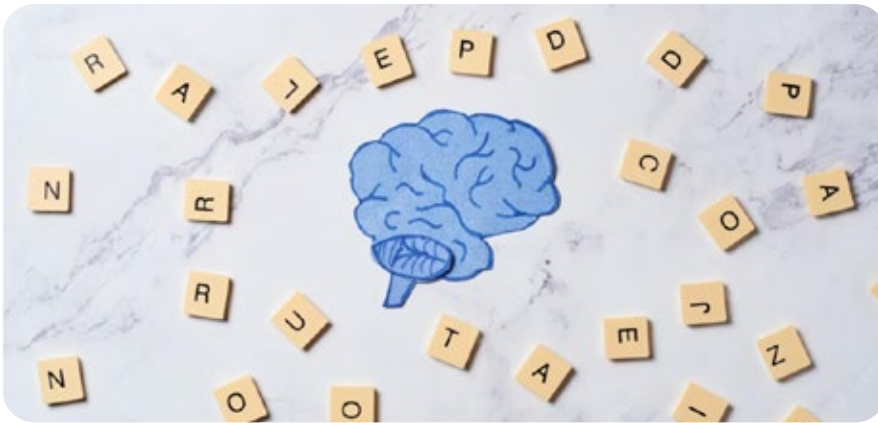
In addition to the above, students with this condition, may present **difficulties at the level of writing.** These include:

   • Little, or no spelling accuracy.

   • Limited or no precision in grammar and punctuation.

   • Handwriting barely legible.

   • Difficulty in organising ideas and writing clearly.

2. The affected school skills have implications both for the performance of school activities and for daily life and professional tasks.

3. The symptoms mentioned above start quite early in a pupil's school career, but in some cases these difficulties may only become evident in adulthood.

Nevertheless, and considering the Portuguese Dyslexia Association (Dislex), we can also specify a panoply of symptoms associated with this disorder, namely:

Behavioural manifestations

○ Slowness in completing school tasks (homework, for example).

○ Lack of ease in carrying out reading tasks, or avoidance of them.

○ Short periods of concentration time due to external stimuli.

○ School results below the intellectual capacity of the student.

○ Difficulties in learning new languages.

○ Blockades in the face of exposure (reading, for example).

○ Evidence of isolating behaviours in school and classroom contexts.

○ Better results in oral tests than in written ones.

Emotional changes

○ Anxiety when facing evaluations or reading and writing situations.

○ Presence of feelings of frustration, shame, sadness and inferiority.

○ Evidence of low self-esteem.

○ Sleep disturbance.

Dyslexia is the most common ASD occurring in school settings.

All children with dyslexia have language difficulties, varying in severity from child to child. Some have difficulty with reading and no problems with arithmetic or memory.

Others read more fluently and have great difficulty with spelling.In most cases, signs are only evident when the child starts learning to read and write. A diagnosis can only be made by the end of Year 2, although it is more common in Year 3, through tests:

- ☑ Assessment of reading and writing skills (fluency, expression, accuracy, comprehension, language development).

- ☑ Assessment of their cognitive profile (intelligence quotient - IQ. verbal and achievement skills).

- ☑ Language assessment (phonological awareness, ability to rapidly name visual stimuli, understanding of instructions, verbal memory).

- ☑ Medical examinations (screening for visual or hearing problems). (Ribeiro, 2023).
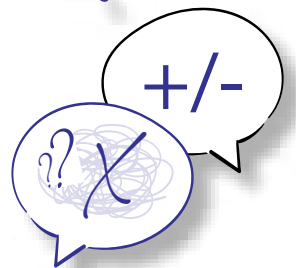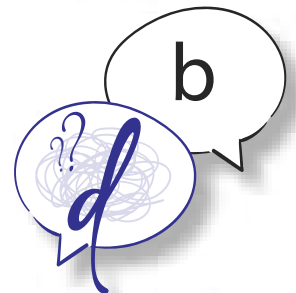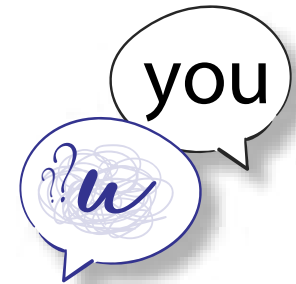
It is important to note that there may be three other learning disorders associated with dyslexia: **dysorthography, dysgraphia and dyscalculia.**

Dysorthography is a difficulty in spelling, more precisely in the acquisition of learning to write, where the most obvious feature is the presence of spelling errors.

Dysgraphia, on the other hand, is a difficulty in drawing letters, resulting from difficulties at the motor level, i.e. changes in fine motor skills and speed of movement.

Finally, **dyscalculia** is the difficulty manifested in the development of mathematical reasoning and calculation (Pinto, 2015).

6.2.2 AN "INVISIBLE" LEARNING DIFFICULTY

In most cases, it is mainly parents who first notice that their child is having problems keeping up with the classmates. In some of these cases, the parents have older children whose learning was very different.

As for the teachers, in a class of twenty or more children, it is very difficult to detect mild dyslexia as they can't fool the teacher by memorising the texts he or she asks them to read.

Although dyslexia is an 'invisible' learning difficulty, the child is well aware of their difficulties and knows that they are not like other children. This leads to low self-esteem and fear that others will find out and that they will be rejected/excluded by their peers. (Ribeiro, A. 2023)

Some children with dyslexia manage to hide their difficulties so that others do not notice. They are often good orators, they can talk and even make speeches, giving the impression that they have understood what is being discussed, even if they cannot put their ideas in writing.

It is therefore important to check at home if the child has understood well what has been explained, first orally and then repeating it until you are sure that he has understood well. Do not consider it a waste of time to check the child's tasks and do not hesitate to question him, as often as necessary, to see if he has understood what has been asked of him. "When he does not want to go to school, does not want to be separated from his parents, isolates himself in his room, does not want to talk about school, there are changes in his eating habits and routines, grumbles about everything and nothing…. These are all signs to which you should pay attention and ask the family doctor/pediatrician or even the teachers for help. In most cases, these behaviours are linked to the school environment.

There are several ways to detect low self-esteem, such as:

✓ Little pre-disposition to start studying and doing homework.

✓ Very anxious when doing homework.

✓ Avoids looking others in the eye

✓ Tendency to avoid others and isolate themselves

✓ Overcautiousness in doing when checking their work

✓ Isolates himself from his classmates and seeks the company of younger or older children

✓ Tendency to make a scene to attract attention.

✓ In spite of not being able to answer a question, prefers to take more time, rather than ask for help.

✓ Little persistence.

✓ Low self-confidence.

Although children's self-esteem is already being built up by the time they enter primary school, their first experiences at school can be of decisive importance. When we talk about a child with dyslexia, he or she is very vulnerable to the first learning experiences, which are difficult for them and marked by failure.

Because they do not feel equal to other classmates, they isolate themselves, so their participation in group work is essential. It is necessary to be very attentive, so that it may result in a positive experience and, to check that they are not put aside and to be careful to ask for tasks which are in accordance with their capacities and interests, according to their competences. Parents should ask the teacher to be attentive and to get the child to interact in a positive and constructive way. Children with dyslexia are very creative and this will add value to the group.

Children with low self-esteem react positively when they are given responsibilities they may correspond to. Every occasion should be sought where they can foresee this possibility and, in this way, value it.

Peer tutoring can also be a useful help. You might suggest that a good student at school supports the child with dyslexia in some of the subjects he needs. Not to do it for them, but to guide them through a particular task so that they can do it themselves. This can be an extremely beneficial option.

Parents can contribute significantly because knowing how to be in society is a way for the child to feel at ease and thus to have more emotional stability and security.

Motivation is another major difficulty, given that the child is constantly dealing with failure. However, it is fundamental, as they will learn better if there is motivation. There are two important factors in motivation

which are: success and knowing that one can perform a certain task, so the teacher must take care to propose a task which the child can complete successfully and, if necessary, break it down into sequences with accessible intermediate objectives.

Many parents complain about their children's lack of motivation, saying "my son is "lazy", "my daughter is not interested in anything". Perhaps it is not laziness, but a lack of motivation because they have lost their natural curiosity when it comes to learning at school.

Motivation is closely linked to our level of self-confidence and that of others. The more your child has confidence in himself, the more he will be motivated. The more they are motivated, the more they will be involved in their work. The more involved they are, the more confidence and success they will have (Ribeiro,2023).

6.2.3 TRUTHS, MYTHS AND IMPACTS

◇ According to several studies, dyslexia affects between 5% and 10% of the school population worldwide. A greater predominance of dyslexia has been observed in the male gender (Ribeiro, 2023).

◇ In November 2020 the International Congress on Dyslexia and Learning Disabilities was held online, at which Margaret Snowling spoke about the importance of heredity for the early detection of dyslexia, which accounts for the high incidence of dyslexia among siblings, parents and other relatives of dyslexic children.

◇ Dyslexia has no clear cause but there are complex relationships with other disorders which may be associated with it. This leads to a number of explanatory hypotheses. Thus the study of dyslexia involves a wide range of disciplines: genetics, neuropsychology (enhanced by MRI and neuroimaging), psychology and psychopathology.

◇ On the basis of the latest research, there are more reliable behavioural indicators of the processes used in reading which make it possible to diagnose a child with dyslexia. The most obvious manifestation of dyslexia is the failure to develop the ability to recognise written words out of context. The child then has significant difficulties in understanding written texts because the recognition of written words is different in accuracy/accuracy and fluency/speed.

◇ It should be stressed that a child may have difficulty in learning to read and not have dyslexia. Their difficulties may be due to a variety of reasons: an inadequate command of the language, coming from an unstimulating social and cultural background, or poor attendance at school.

◇ Another myth that is still heard is that dyslexia is purely a social invention, invented by the middle classes to justify their children's failure. This is clearly not correct, as there is much evidence that dyslexia is brain-based.

Predominance in the male gender

Heredity

There is no obvious cause

Cannot learn to read or write
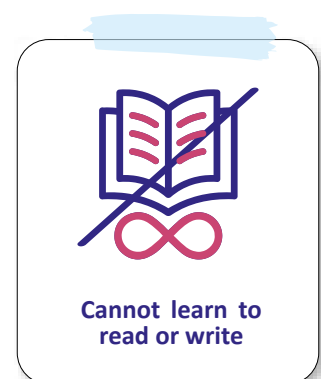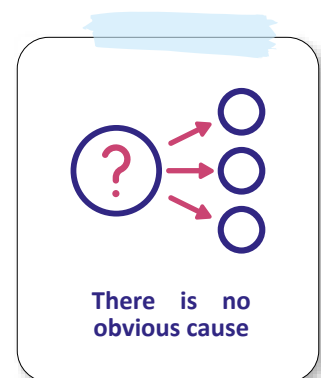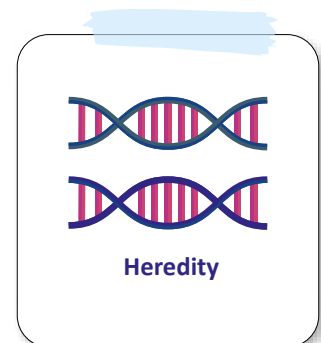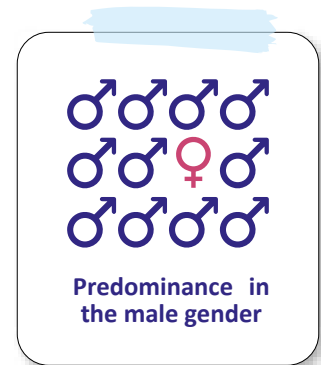
◇ There is now no doubt that dyslexia, in most cases, has a strong genetic basis, but it is not a monogenic disorder, i.e. linked to the mutation of a single gene. (Ribeiro,2023).

◇ The neurological origin of dyslexia can be confirmed by MRI and neuroimaging. Since dyslexia is a neurological problem, children with dyslexia cannot be 'cured' but need constant, close support and encouragement. We know that they can live with this condition and succeed on a personal and professional level.

◇ The functional activity of the dyslexic's brain is not normal. several key regions are not sufficiently activated in both visual analysis and phonological processing.

◇ There is a misconception about the help provided to the child, since lessons, speech therapy sessions and re-education only intervene at the psychological level, quite distinct from the neurological level. How can all these interventions change a pathology of the neuronal circuits? There is, however, a relationship of identity between each of our thoughts and the function of interconnecting the neurons of our brain: we cannot touch one without affecting the other.

◇ There is no standard treatment suitable for all and individualised intervention should be the main concern. These children also reveal a slower rhythm of work when compared to their peers. It is necessary to give time to time and, above all, always motivate them, however few the positive results may be.

It's laziness and an excuse for school failure

They are not smart

Resolves with speech therapy and re-education

See things backwards
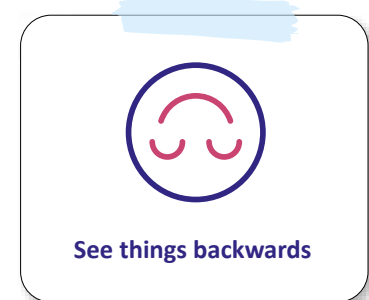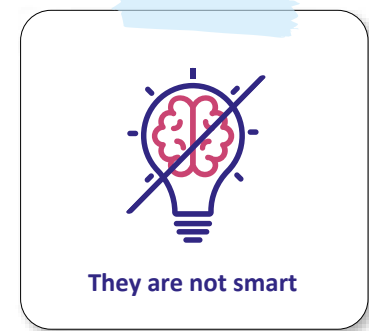
6.3 EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Children with Specific Learning Disabilities encounter a number of barriers to learning acquisition that, consequently, have implications for their full educational development. Therefore, it is crucial that there is a real concern for the inclusion of these students in the educational context, through the adoption of measures, as well as pedagogical strategies, so that they achieve not only the desired academic achievement, but also the full development as a subject. In this sense, it is crucial to mention some positive measures for learning acquisition, namely:

- ✿ Use of coloured pens.

- ✿ Using multi-sensory teaching methods. These methods make use of movement, touch, along with what we see and hear to help the student acquire skills in writing and reading, for example.

- ✿ Present written content (assessment tests, sheets, etc) on separate sheets, in order to facilitate the completion of the task.

- ✿ Write information/guidelines by topics, in order to facilitate the student's understanding.

- ✿ Use of videos. Use videos. Video presentations can help students with dyslexia to learn.

- ✿ Do not ask to read aloud.

- ✿ The use of positive reinforcement by the teacher when the student achieves a goal or overcomes some difficulty.

- ✿ If the student feels stressed, the teacher should allow a few minutes for relaxation.

- ✿ Encouraging the student to work independently. Students with this condition find it easier to remember information when they study independently, for example, carrying out research.

- ✿ Keep external noises out of the classroom.
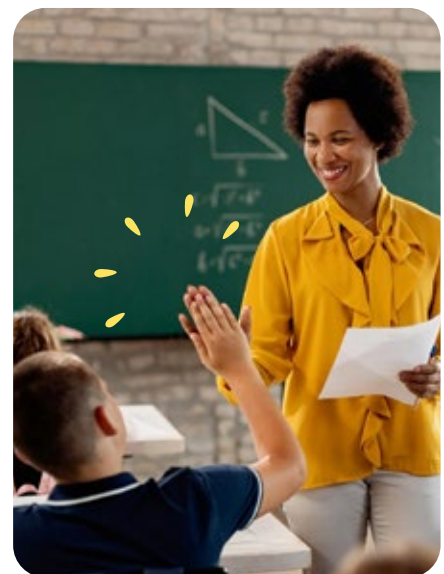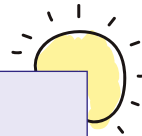
6.4. INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGY IN THE CLASSROOM

We can highlight, as positive factors for learning success: high levels of schooling and culture. richer language and greater economic and time availability.

Students with Dyslexia require adaptations to facilitate learning acquisition. It is essential that teachers are aware of the real needs and challenges faced by these students. It is therefore the responsibility of teachers to provide a range of inclusive, pedagogical measures as outlined below:

- Providing different ways of working in the classroom context (large/small group, pairs or individually).

- Maintain throughout the lessons, verbal interactions with the students, in order to understand if the student is understanding or not the subject taught

- Clarify all the doubts raised by the student.

- Monitoring throughout the performance of tests.

- Make summaries of the contents taught, in order to facilitate the student's study.

- Allow the recording of the material given during the lessons.

- Allowing the student to use other ways of presenting the contents (drawings, pictures, videos, etc.) instead of written assignments.

-

It is essential to have extra-classroom activities that provide the development of competencies related to learning, namely at the level of writing, reading and comprehension. Thus, it is important that the school provides the following activities:

- **Memory stimulation.**
- **Activities related to reading.**
- **Writing activities.**
- **Concentration exercises.**

A.   MULTISENSORY TEACHING METHODS

Multisensory methods are methods which combine sight, hearing and touch to help the child to read and spell words correctly. The child starts by observing the written grapheme, then "writes" it in the air with the finger, listening and articulating its pronunciation. Later, they can cut it out, mould it in plasticine or clay and, with their eyes closed, recognise it by touch. Carrying out these activities therefore favours the creation of visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, tactile and articulatory images which, as a whole, affect the globalisation or unity of the reading and writing process.

B.   SCIENTIFIC RE-EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES

Although intervention techniques in dyslexia vary according to the reference models, there is now a consensus among researchers as to the principles which should govern intervention. Some of these principles, such as thorough assessment of possible deficits, mechanisms and errors, or the development of individualised programmes, should be tailored to the specificity of each case. It is important to stress that there are procedures whose re-educational effectiveness has been widely demonstrated, but not all of them are valid for all dyslexics (Ribeiro,2023). This type of procedure always involves intensive training, both at school and at home.

C.   READING - USE OF STRATEGIES THAT ENHANCE DECODING, *ACCORDING TO ANGELINA RIBEIRO (2023):*

Decoding is the ability to break down words read, into sound units, the phonemes, and find the correspondence between the letters, the graphemes.

When a child decodes a new word, it will immediately develop the ability to store/save its image in its memory, in its mental lexicon, or internal lexicon. In this way, he/she will be able to recognise it, automatically, every time he/she sees/reads it, no longer needing to go through decoding.

We can talk about an "internal dictionary", built up little by little in your memory and which will allow you to read fluently.

Children with dyslexia have difficulty developing this automaticity as they cannot build up this internal lexicon. Sometimes the same word may be decoded, learned, repeated, revised multiple times in different ways until it is automatically recognised. Without this

rapid word recognition, children will continue to decode each word of the text they are reading, which will surely take them much longer than using the internal lexicon.

It is necessary to teach children to develop the automatic recognition of words and to know how to decode them correctly. For this, you need to have a good grasp of the sound elements of language, their combinations and their letter representations.

This training is essential before entering primary school, i.e. pre-school, from the age of 3.Fluent reading is fundamental because it gives access to understanding what the child reads.

In conclusion it is essential for children with dyslexia to acquire good decoding skills, to learn strategies to build up their mental lexicon and to access fluent reading in order to know what they are reading, i.e. to have good comprehension.

D. STRATEGIES THAT ENHANCE PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS, *ACCORDING TO ANGELINA RIBEIRO (2023):*

Strategies for decoding have to do with phonological awareness.

Phonological awareness is the ability to realise that words read are made up of phonetic units (phonemes and syllables) and to distinguish between them. The phonemes of language can be combined into a considerable number of different syllables. This becomes a challenge for children with dyslexia who aim to develop the automaticity of phoneme/grapheme correspondence.

To develop phonological awareness, the first phase, the child should be taught how to distinguish the different sounds of the language, know how to add or omit them, i.e. manipulate them. Also explain, whenever possible in a playful way, that oral language is made up of sentences, words, syllables (e.g. the word "tomato" is made up of 3 syllables to/ ma/to, rhymes (rhymes in children's songs play an important role in learning) and finally that words can be broken down into their smallest unit, the phonemes (e.g. in the word room: /r/o/o/m).

As mentioned above, the playfulness of the game is extremely important in developing these skills.

E.   STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING METACOGNITION

The metacognitive process is present throughout the development of the reading process, directing and controlling it. It is necessary to propose strategies, throughout this process, so that students reflect, question at any time what they are doing and evaluate the content of the text, equipping them to carry out the understanding of the text. The aim is to make their knowledge of textual structure accessible to them and to equip them with the resources to take control of their activity. Techniques may be used, such as the portfolio, thinking aloud (encouraging predictions and hypothesis formulations on the topic in question), reading guided by the teacher and the questionnaire or recordings/appointments (Ribeiro, 2023).

F.   STRATEGIES FOR EVALUATION

☑ Greater use of oral tests to the detriment of written tests.

☑ Conducting assessment tests that avoid:

✓ Multiple choice questions.

✓ Direct questions.

✓ Present in the test only the essentials.

☑ Undervaluing spelling mistakes.

☑ Not valuing poor writing, inadequate syntax, abbreviated expressions.

☑ Devaluing graphical motor traits (e.g. leaving the margins).

☑ Valuing content expressed rather than whether or not it is correctly written.

☑ Paused reading, by the teacher, of the texts, not only of the evaluation tests, but also of the other tasks developed in the classroom context.

☑ To allow more time for the completion of tests.

☑ To grant more moments of assessment, in a non--concentrated way and in different modes.

6.5 PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES

Regardless of the Specific Learning Disability, some general good practices are highlighted:
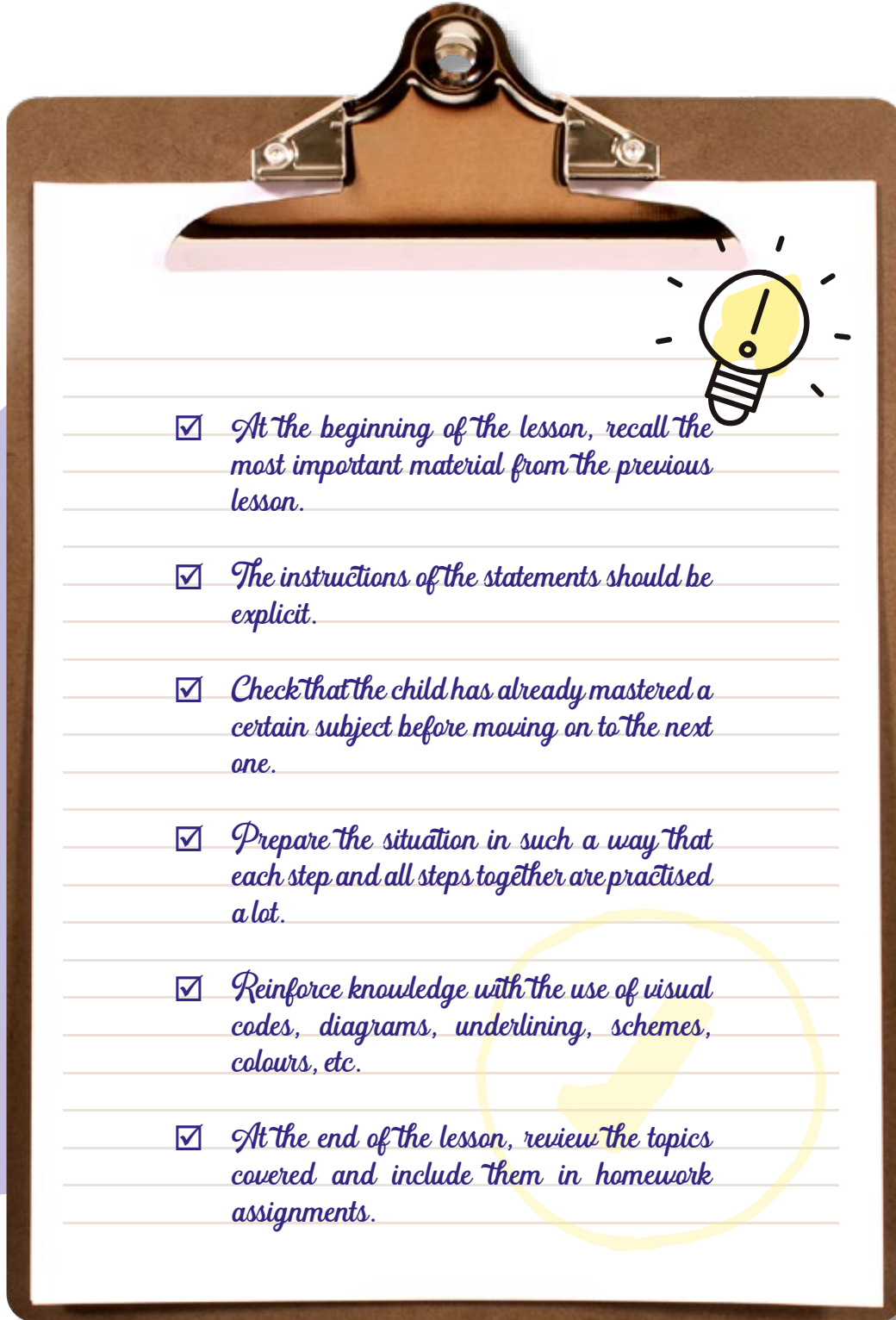
☑ At the beginning of the lesson, recall the most important material from the previous lesson.

☑ The instructions of the statements should be explicit.

☑ Check that the child has already mastered a certain subject before moving on to the next one.

☑ Prepare the situation in such a way that each step and all steps together are practised a lot.

☑ Reinforce knowledge with the use of visual codes, diagrams, underlining, schemes, colours, etc.

☑ At the end of the lesson, review the topics covered and include them in homework assignments.

A. PRACTICES TO IMPROVE SEMANTICS

✓ Carrying out activities whose aim is sentence completion. For example: "I drive a car and I drive a _____").

Figure 3

1. Use of the Cloze method. This method consists of structuring a text, where some words are eliminated and replaced by a dash, where the reader will have to complete it with the most adequate word to the theme of the text, in order to make sense of it (figure 3). This method may be applied as an exercise or as an assessment exercise (Cunha et al. 2009)

2. Include games, such as the game "Playing with 3 Rhymes" (figure 4), indicated for developing phonological awareness through word association.

✓ Use of riddles.

✓ Using word association tasks to facilitate accuracy, fluency and word speed. Namely the following tasks:- Use of riddles.

a. Free association tasks ("Name as many things as the student can remember for 1 minute")

b. Controlled association tasks ("Name as many foods as the student can remember for 1 minute").

c. Recall synonymous and antonymous words.

✓ Through sharing words (verbs, nouns, pronouns, adjectives, etc) encourage the student to construct sentences.

Figure 4

B. PRACTICES FOR IMPROVING SYNTAX

✓ Use of activities where the aim is to complete sentences, as well as the Cloze method. For example: "The bus was slow. It was driving very ... (fast/slow)"

✓ Present sentences, where the order of the sentences is wrong. Each sentence should be printed on a separate card so that the student can manipulate and arrange the pieces to arrange the sentence correctly.

✓ Encourage the student to write sentences similar to a model sentence. The model sentence should be presented together with a graphic representation, and a second image of a related situation should be provided so that the student can write a second one.

C.   PRACTICES TO IMPROVE ARTICULATION:

✓ Provide an inclusive classroom environment where the student feels comfortable. A space where they feel encouraged to interact with peers and the teacher.

✓ Conduct listening activities in order to increase awareness of sounds. For example, read a list of words and ask the student to clap whenever they hear a particular sound.

✓ Allow time for the student to express themselves and try to understand what they are saying, even if it is difficult.

D.   PRACTICES TO IMPROVE PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS:

✓ Remove the first phoneme of a word: pato-ato.

✓ Replace the first phoneme of a word by Routro: pato - rato.

✓ Create words from syllables: /la/ and /ta/ - lata

✓ Inverting two phonemes in a word: pato -tapo.

✓ Finding words that rhyme ...

✓ Children with dyslexia generally have great difficulty with this kind of exercise.

E.   PRACTICES FOR READING AND COMPREHENSION, *ACCORDING TO RIBEIRO (2023):*

Comprehension can be divided into two levels: microstructure (words and sentences) and **macrostructure** (global text).

Although many of the proposals are aimed more at teachers, we are aware that many parents have the knowledge to apply them in order to help their children.

At the **microstructure** level, these include:

Understanding the meaning of words:

• Associate (give the meaning of a word, before starting to read).

• Establish semantic relations between a word (antonyms, homonyms, synonyms).

• Read a text in which some words, easy to infer, have been omitted

• Use the dictionary (basic, synonyms and antonyms) to find out the meaning of new words.

• Understanding sentences or paragraphs:

• Recognise sentence structure.

- Classify and categorise structures.
- Completing sentences.
- Reconstructing sentences.
- Paraphrase a sentence with the same meaning.
- Analyse a complex sentence in its propositional components.

At inter-orational level:

- Ordering paragraphs of a text by using connectors.
- Inserting connectors in a text with gaps.

At the level of **macrostructure,** these include knowledge of textual structure, processing strategies for meaning, the adequacy of concepts about the world, and content learning.

Use of text structure as a prediction mechanism:

- Explain, with the help of a diagram, each of the elements of text grammar.
- Master the structure of the text, the identification of the subject of the text and the schematisation of the content.
- Identify the communicative features of the text, the style, and recognise text types in different situations.
- econstructing a text, from given fragments, taking into account its semantic structure. Students have to make inferences to structure the parts so that they fit together, like a jigsaw puzzle.
- Completing incomplete texts, so that they become adequate in content and structure.

Developing basic knowledge:

- To create experiences that enable students to have a real connection of language with reality, i.e. to use the context (comments on group experiences, field trips to places of interest, notes of interesting conversations they have heard in contexts other than the school...).
- Acquire different contents, about different subjects.

Development of all dimensions of the overall understanding of the text:

- Summarise the text read (following a logical coherence, differentiating the various parts of the text and removing redundancies).

- Make predictions or solve some of the problems or situations that are presented on the topic of the text. The teacher encourages the student to anticipate the outcome, ask questions, discover meanings and reflect on the theme of the text. In this way, students formulate hypotheses or assumptions.

Use techniques to develop all dimensions of overall comprehension of the text:

- Make predictions or solve some problems or situations that arise, about the topic of the text, among others

Source: Ribeiro, A. (2023) Guia para pais de crianças com dislexia.
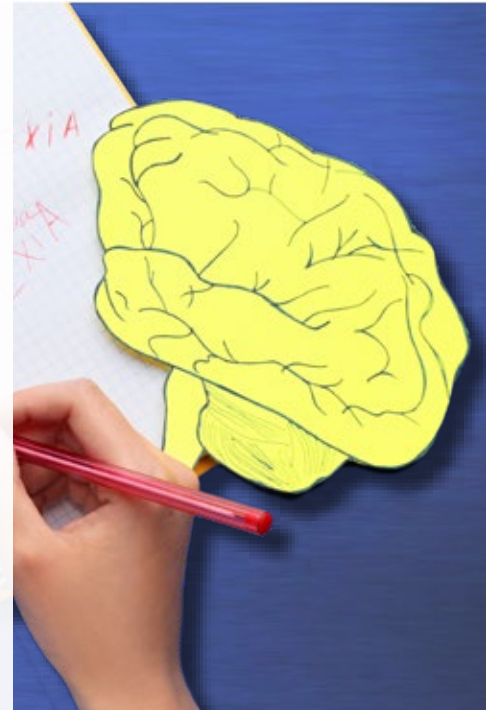
F. PRACTICES OF TEACHING METACOGNITION

For students to become constructors of meaning rather than passive readers of texts, who only transform the information, it is necessary to change the way of teaching reading comprehension. To do so, we must modify practices, using various strategies, which teachers can implement in the classroom context:

✓ Present students with motivating or even playful texts.

✓ Propose activities before, during and after reading.

✓ Present students with a variety of texts (informative, narrative, descriptive, comparative, ...).

✓ Accept personal responses and interpretations.

✓ Use reading for the student to learn about himself and the world, as a form of communication, to know stories...

✓ Keep the student in permanent contact with books (at school, family and in other contexts).

✓

By way of conclusion, reference is made to the Guide "DYSLEXIE - guide pratique pour les parents et tous ceux qui les acconpagnent" (Gravin Reid, 2014 cit in Ribeiro, A. 2023), where some suggestions are given to parents and teachers, which may help children with ASD to overcome their difficulties, namely:
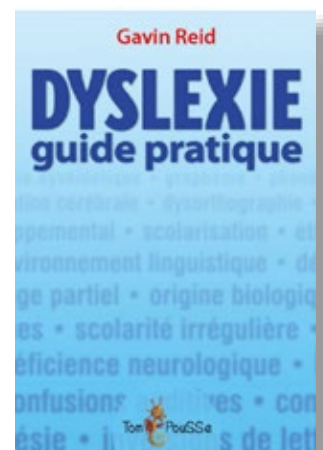
DIFFICULTIES	HOW TO HELP
Problem of reading the statements.	• Help to read the statement. • Be aware that mathematics statements are often difficult to understand. • Encourage reading several times.
Her hesitations prevent her from participating spontaneously in mathematics activities.	• Read with a reading ruler and offer help with the words connected to mathematics, the written numbers, the letters and the most important numbers in order to understand the statement.
Difficulties, when new/unfamiliar words appear which become an obstacle, to understanding the rest of the text	• Write mathematical vocabulary on a poster and put it in a visible place. • Mark the words in the statements which are clues to the operations to be performed. • Put in a notebook the specific vocabulary for each subject, with definitions and examples.
Need to read the text several times to understand.	• Divide the exercise into groups and underline. Identify the different steps of the calculation/problem, performing each operation, using the numbers and symbols.
Too long statement, when you get to the middle you can't remember what you read at the beginning.	• Due to the specific vocabulary, the statements are difficult for these children. • Teach them to divide the exercises into as many steps as possible.
You get lost reading a statement and miss the important words.	• Follow the lines with the reading ruler, underlining the meaning groups in colour.
Difficulty in reading larger numbers.	• Prevalence in children with difficulty identifying left and right. • Help to break down the numbers: thousands, hundreds of thousands.... • Help rereading from left to right, read aloud with child.
Difficulty in memorising rules (e.g. the order of operations)	• Write down the rules in a notebook and then practise as much as possible to retain them in your long-term memory.
It is lost when a box appears in the statement relating to the problem.	• Due to problems with left and right they may not see the vertical pictures in the statement. • Use another colour or underline.
You don't always see the commas in decimal numbers.	• Use a larger, clearly visible comma (can be red in colour).

G.   SPECIFIC PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES FOR EACH DISCIPLINE

DIFFICULTIES FACED	WHAT TO DO / HOW HELP
FIRST LANGUAGE **Dictation** Spelling will be even more difficult: unidentified errors, increased complexity in texts, slow transcription, rereading and correction.	• Delete one or two sentences from the dictation. • Give the chance to reread at length while the others complete the dictation. • Count the number of errors and value any decrease. • In the periodic assessment separate the assessment of errors and grammar.
Grammar Grammatical analyses will be more difficult to understand if your grammatical vocabulary is not explicit. How can you memorise and understand if the meaning of each word is not defined?	• Ensure that he understands and distinguishes the meaning of words: adjective/adverb, preposition/proposition. • Use tricks to facilitate memorisation.
Reading Quietly there is a better overall understanding. In a loud voice disturbed by emotion, the compensation mechanisms will be more apparent and therefore more disturbing, blocking the fluidity of the reading and sometimes preventing comprehension of the text.	• Slow down the speed of reading aloud (speed leads to a considerable increase in errors in dyslexics). • Do not force reading aloud in the presence of other students.
Written composition The same difficulties found in oral expression also appear in writing: • Syntax disregard • Language level too familiar • Poor and repetitive vocabulary • Poor use of verb tenses • Poor punctuation • Poor accentuation. • Does not know how to delimit the different parts of a text (introduction, development and conclusion), linking and chronologically structuring his/her speech. In addition, there are still the difficulties of spelling, already presented earlier that rob you of a lot of time.	• Give priority to content over form. • Do exercises in stylistics. • Help you to organise the ideas of a text. • Do not penalise for spelling.

DIFFICULTIES FACED	WHAT TO DO / HOW HELP
FOREIGN LANGUAGES We encounter the same difficulties as in the mother tongue in reading, spelling, verb conjugation and grammar. **English / French** • The difficulty in associating spelling with sound is greater due to the little habit of hearing new sounds and seeing new spellings. • Hearing of very close sounds, but with different spelling and meaning.. • Letters not pronounced, but written. • Different agreement rules.	• Work on pronunciation (even if it is exaggerated, especially in the first weeks of learning).
HISTORY – GEOGRAPHY • Chronological problems, e.g. before and after Jesus Christ, the calculation of counting the years is not done in the same way. • Inversion of dates and numbers. • Problems locating on diagrams and understanding scales. • Memorisation difficulties. • Difficulties in spelling foreign words and even difficulties in written expression.	• Use visual presentation, e.g. chronological friezes. • Help you to make a lesson plan so you can study. • Take no importance of spelling mistakes. • Valorise any progress or success.
BIOLOGY • Difficulty in complex words, e.g. chlorophyll, diaphragm. • Inversion or failure to understand schema. • Problems with memorisation.	• Do not discount for spelling mistakes. • Value any progress or success.
MATH • Difficulties reading statements with complex words such as adjacent, circumscribed, parallelogram... • Inverses signs and digits without getting the results wrong. • Frequently changes signs > and <. • Inversion of references in geometry: up, down. right, left... • Confusing the letters designating an angle ADC by ABC. • Problems with visualisation and spatial organisation.	• Advise logical-mathematical re-education. • Understand that you can reverse the signs, but make a correct calculation. • Take into account not only the results, but also the reasoning valuing progress and success.

DIFFICULTIES FACED	WHAT TO DO / HOW HELP
PHYSICAL CHEMISTRY • Difficulties in vocabulary. Inversion of references, e.g. In electricity reverse the poles. • Inversion of logic. • In chemistry difficulty in memorising symbols and formulae.	• Do not discount for spelling mistakes. • Value any progress or success.
TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION - VISUAL EDUCATION • Problems with spatial orientation. • Difficulties in manual work. • Problems with schematisation and spatial orientation. • Difficulties in organisation and planning.	• Support him/her as much as possible (either by the teacher or by classmates) in the tasks where he/she has the greatest difficulties. • Valorise e any progress or success • Help you to organise work plan.
MUSIC • Difficulties in solfeggio. • Hearing problems, confusion of the sounds and lines of the staff and clefs • Difficulties in reproducing and memorising rhythms.	• Value any progress or success. • Support as much as possible (either by the teacher or peers) in the tasks where you have the most difficulties.
PHYSICAL EDUCATION • Difficulties in memorising sequences. • Laterality and body schema problems. • Difficulties in motor, spatial and temporal coordination. • Rhythm problems.	• Verbalise while learning the sequences. • Explain exercises individually to the student prior to their application. • Valorise any progress or success

Source : Ribeiro, A. (2023) Guide for parents of children with dyslexia.
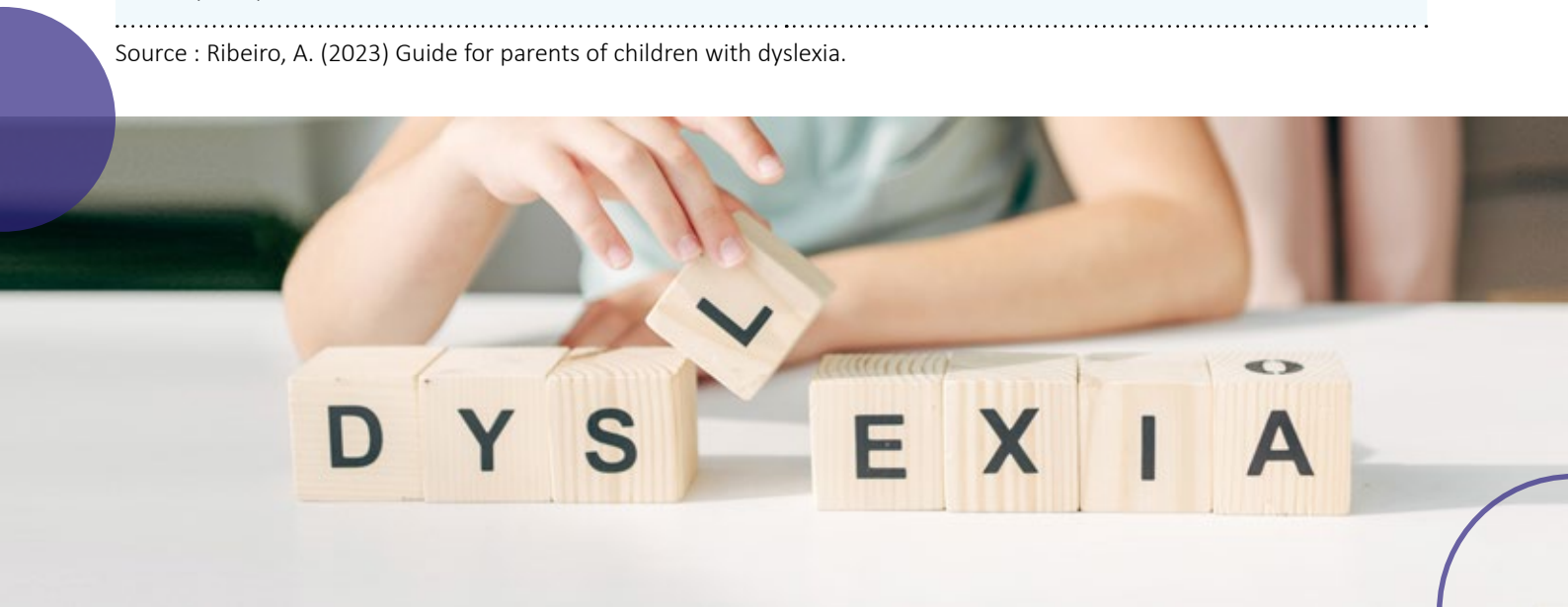
H.   PRACTICES TO WORK ON THE MOTIVATION OF THE STUDENT

According to Ribeiro (2023), the work of student motivation is subdivided into:

Motivation for success	Social motivation	Motivation through feedback
What is success? With children with dyslexia, success is certainly not achieving the highest goal set by the teacher. Success depends from child to child and the energy they put into a particular task. Unrealistic goals are the main cause of failure at school Nowadays, in our society, there is constant competition, parents "demand" that their children be the best. Although there are some positive aspects, in the case of children with dyslexia it is a risky strategy to put the child under great pressure, it is not an appropriate strategy.	Social interactions, especially with peers, are crucial for the child with dyslexia. In this way they can develop skills such as sharing, listening to others, waiting their turn to speak, respecting others' opinions... Parents should ensure that friendships within the class are constructive and positive because they can be of great help to the child	All children like feedback on their performance so that they can orient themselves and know that they are on the right track. It is therefore advisable that it is not a simple comment, such as whether it is right or wrong, but a positive or positively formulated comment. Parents should be aware that their child always expects you to comment on his/her work, so that he/she is more relaxed and thus more motivated to do other tasks.
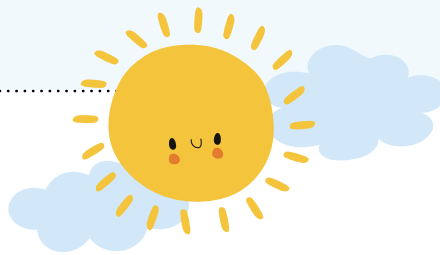
I.   FAMILY STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES

In her book 'Guide for parents of dyslexic children' by Neus Buisán Cabot (2013) (quoted in Ribeiro, A. 2023), several suggestions are given that all parents can easily put into practice.

- **The book as a toy.**

From early childhood, the book can simply be a toy. There are books in plastic, hard cardboard that they can touch and even take to the bath. It will be a way for them to learn to see the pictures and associate them with their first words.

- **I love to read!**

Always encourage him and don't miss any occasion to infect him with our enthusiasm and his conviction that reading is rewarding

- **What story do you want me to read to you today?**

Early on, make time to read to her and share. All children love to have stories read to them. Even if your child can already read, you will appreciate the pleasure that those few minutes a day give you when you read to your child. We also know that there are parents who don't read to their children and it is very important that teachers do it frequently. This activity can also be carried out by older children in the same school, as it is very rewarding and motivating for both.

- **What do parents, siblings and teachers read?**

Children have us as role models. Getting them to read can only be achieved without imposition, by contact, imitation or seduction.

- **Talk to him about books.**

With great tact and discreetly, we can take an interest in the books he is reading, what he liked best or least liked. We must also teach the child to give constructive criticism. If you pass on your readings with enthusiasm, you will certainly infect your child. We often hear that it's thanks to a particular teacher who infected them with his enthusiasm that they love reading.

- **Read with your child**

You should take an interest in the readings done at school, letting him recommend what he liked best, by asking him some questions. Nothing will give you more satisfaction than playing the role of teacher. Sharing time with your child to encourage him/her to enjoy books is a very gratifying activity that can be carried out despite the hustle and bustle of

daily life, the many proposals for leisure and the tough competitiveness of audiovisuals.

- **Make reading a healthy habit**

In a warm place, with adequate lighting, a quiet environment where you feel comfortable with the book in your hands, alone or with someone to ask the meaning of a word or ask for help in understanding part of a text.

- **Giving books**

A book is a perfect gift, but always take into account the preferences of the reader and not the giver. Books with bright colours should be given to children from 3 years of age. For children aged 6 to 8 years, they should stimulate fantasy. Books for children aged between 9 and 12 should encourage the reader to identify with the characters. From 13 and upwards, combine books that

talk about friendship, mystery or humour, giving them the chance to exchange, with autonomy, as they already know which books they want to read.

- **Visiting libraries and bookshops**

In the company of your child, so that he or she can choose his or her own reading. These are places where you should be advised by specialised people to guide you and give you illusions.

- **Involve yourself in the process**

Read and talk about books with your child, without interrogating him, take an interest in what he reads, maintain an open, equal conversation, without impositions and respect his criteria and choices. Many good readers abandon their reading habits in adolescence, during this period, so it will be important to give them freedom in their choice of reading.
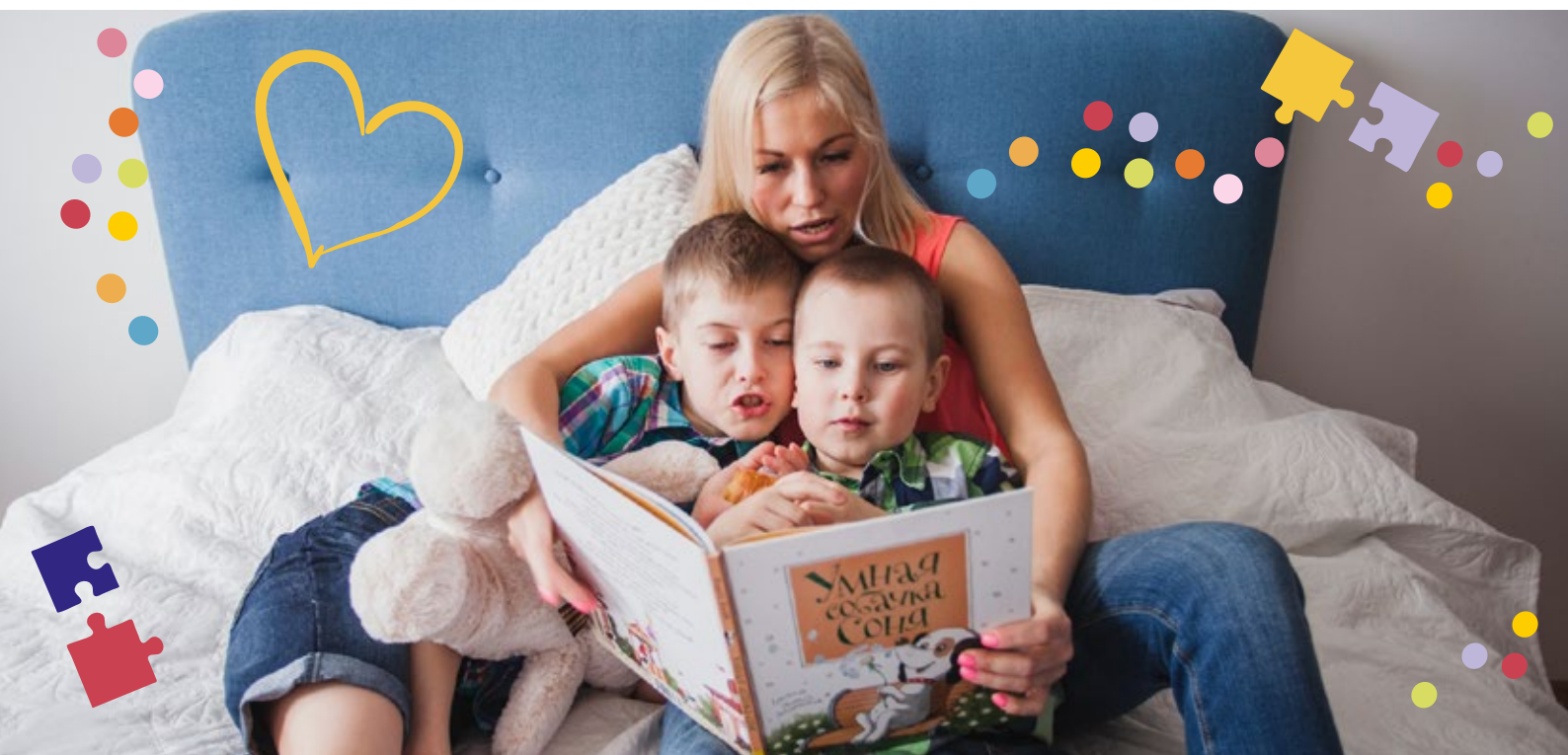
Angelina Ribeiro, shares in her Guide for parents of children with dyslexia, **small tips** that may be useful to help children with ASD at home:

✓ Instead of reading a whole text, read it paragraph by paragraph.

✓ Read a text several times, at least twice.

✓ Ask to recount to whoever is with him or another member of the family what he has just read.

✓ You can buy audiobooks, before the beginning of the school year, of the books you will need.

✓ When reading a book, make a list of the characters and their characterization.

✓ You can use post-its to mark the important parts of the book and thus make it easier to consult them.

✓ If you have a good aural memory, you can make oral summaries and record them for later listening...

All tasks at home are learning opportunities for the child, especially if they have the reference adult(s) with them. Some moments are suggested with description/identification of their usefulness for a child with ASD:

✿ **Cooking**, reading recipes, ingredients (quantities and weight), reducing or increasing ingredients...

✿ **Go to the supermarket,** providing him with a shopping list, which makes him responsible for the identification and quantity of the purchases to be made.

✿ **Ask questions about prices** (should I buy the butter that costs €1.99 or the one that costs €1.45? How much do I save if I buy the one with the lower price?)

✿ **Playing at shops,** taking various objects, toys and fruit and labelling them with prices. making change using coins and notes. creating buying and selling situations.

✿ **Take responsibility for lunchtimes**, going to school or shopping, watching a film, playing... (" I can watch television for half an hour, because at 5 p.m. I'm going out").

✿ **Guess the quantities** of small piles of marbles, coins, fruit and, in the end, count and see who came closest.

✿ **Counting things,** such as flowers in the flower-bed (white, yellow, etc.), cars or bicycles passing in the street, how many steps on the stairs...

✿ **Finding numbers** while walking in the street (the number 3 on the doors, the number of cars parked or passing in the street...).

✿ **Remember telephone numbers**, ask them to say the first 3 or the last 3 numbers of their grandparents and then let them dial the number. (Ribeiro, 2023)

6.6 EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

There are several resources that facilitate students with Dyslexia in the acquisition of learning, namely:

6.6.1 VOICE RECOGNITION PROGRAMMES

It allows the student to speak to the computer, which, through software, converts the words spoken into text. This type of technology helps, for example, in writing summaries or other written communications. Here we can mention as an example the voice recognition functionality incorporated in Windows which, simply, converts voice into written text. To activate this functionality, it is enough to press the Windows and H keys and the toggle button to activate voice recognition. It is important to note that to use this functionality, it is necessary to be connected to the Internet network. Besides the previously mentioned, we can also refer to the *Dragon Professional Individual* software (see figure 5, which allows converting voice to text.

Speechnotes is a free tool that allows you to convert voice to text. It is an easy-to-use resource, as there is no need to register or download it. To use it you just need to access the *Speechnotes link* in Chrome, click on the microphone icon and start dictating what you want to be converted to text. After finishing this process, the document is automatically saved (see figure 6).

SOFTWARE
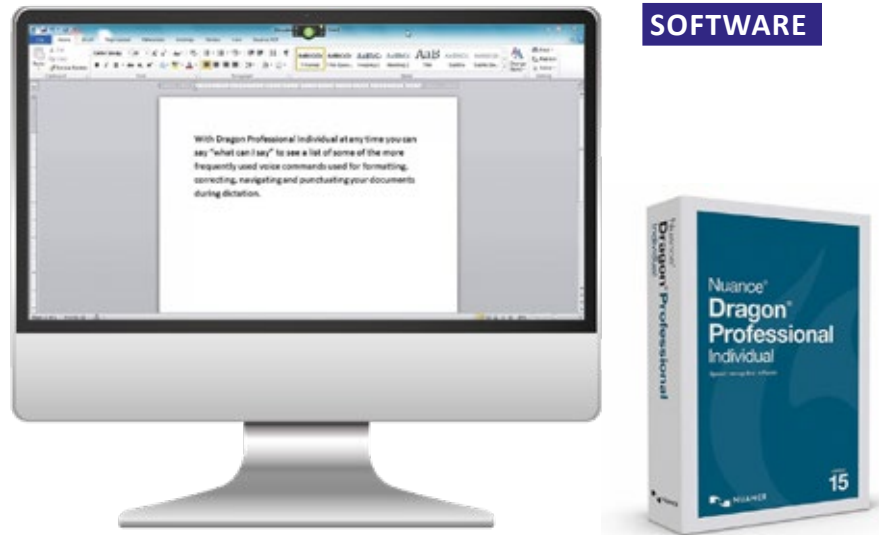
Figure 5

APP

available on Google Play for PC and Mobile

Figure 6

5.5.2   AUTONOMOUS READING PENS

This type of technology allows, through an integrated camera, to store the content of printed texts that are read out loud. This kind of tool becomes fundamental for teaching and learning of children with Specific Learning Disabilities, namely pupils with dyslexia. An example of this assistive technology is shown in figure 7.

A real innovation that has made learning easier for children with dyslexia or other reading difficulties.

The Exam Pen is an important tool for the inclusion of children with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD), namely with dyslexia or other reading difficulties, but also for children with some vision impairments.

This "pen" has been used for several years, worldwide, in different languages (English, Spanish, German, Italian...), however, it has only recently appeared in Portugal.

The Exam Pen stimulates the autonomous reading of printed texts, which it reads aloud. It is also practical because it is small, light and portable.

Easy to use, all you have to do is pass it over each line of text, with the possibility of listening to it with headphones (so as not to disturb your classmates, in class or during exams). There is also a small screen where the text is displayed.

Learn more about the specificities of this resource in the following video:

Figure 7

TUTORIAL

*available in several languages

5.5.3   CLAROREAD SE

This is a literacy aid tool as well as being a simple proofreader. This tool provides reading as the user types. In addition to the above, it also provides reading of the full text as the user hovers the mouse over the required text.

ClaroRead SE (figure 8) is a simple to use and very useful tool for people with Specific Learning Disabilities. This programme is suitable for supporting the learning of new languages. The user can add up to 25 different languages to this tool.

SOFTWARE

*available in several languages

Figure 8

5.5.4   "PLAYING WITH DYSLEXIA" GAME

A game that allows the screening of dyslexia, but is also used in the development of skills linked to reading and writing. Available in Portugal and Spain.

This game shows the importance of working on certain key areas for the process of learning to read and write, which are not always developed in all children, with or without learning difficulties. A good way for parents and children to share moments together and enhance some of the cognitive dimensions of the game: manipulating (motor skills), feeling (emotions), interacting (social interaction), counting (language), memorising (long-term memory), experimenting (executive functions), imagining (creativity and imagination) and explaining (metalanguage and metacognition).

Recommended age: from 8 years old onwards

GAME

Figure 9

APPENDIX 1 – "I HAVE A DYSLEXIC STUDENT - NOW WHAT?"

SURVIVAL GUIDE:

HOW TO SPOT THE FIRST SIGNS

In most cases, there is evidence only when the child starts reading. However, it can take two to three years before a diagnosis is made. In more severe cases, signs appear even before the start of learning to read, namely speech delays.

We should pay attention to two indicators for the early diagnosis of dyslexia:

⮑ The child's personal history (to know if there are cases in the family, if there were delays in locomotion or problems in lateral dominance (right/left), in spatial orientation (up/down, front/rear).

⮑ Delays in language development (an increasingly evident factor as the first warning sign).

There are signs that can help in the diagnosis, allowing an intervention to start as early as possible.

Early detection must take into account various aspects that may indicate the possibility that the child may have dyslexia, but it is essential to asses with specialist technicians in different areas (multidisciplinary team): psychologist, speech therapist and special education teacher. If necessary, the child may also be assessed by a psychomotor therapist or referred to a medical consultation (paediatrician or neuropediatrician).

WHAT TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION:

✓ Communication and language

✓ Poor phonological performance (associating letters with sounds) may be an indication of future difficulties in reading and writing.

✓ Memory

✓ If a child cannot remember two pieces of information given to him/her and does not retain them, he/she may have a working memory deficit.

✓ Difficulty listening to stories

✓ He/she may have difficulty following the development of a story or show a difficulty in attention and concentration.

✓ Naming and classifying elements in order- Pode revelar dificuldade em se lembrar de objetos de uso corrente, com um pente (um dia sabe e no dia seguinte já não sabe).

Physical and motor development

More or less marked motor difficulties may appear. Balance is an important skill in learning.

REMMENBER:

It is important to note that not all of these difficulties appear simultaneously in children with dyslexia. each will present with widely varying difficulties.

1. You should be alert when the child shows the following signs:

IN PRE-SCHOOL

- Distracted and confused.
- Difficulty speaking (pronouncing certain sounds/phonemes)
- Difficulty in remembering the letters of the alphabet.
- Exchanges letters.
- Difficulty in memorizing the order of the letters of the alphabet.
- Difficulty in motor coordination (bumps into tables and chairs).
- Difficulty in performing tasks that require good fine motor skills (tying shoelaces)
- Difficulty in reacting before starting any task
- Difficulty in concentrating on tasks that require greater concentration
- Confuses words with similar pronunciation.
- Difficulty in memorising and following children's songs, nursery rhymes and tasks with rhymes.
- Difficulty in processing and understanding what is heard.Difficulty in understanding quick instructions.
- Difficulty remembering the sequence of things.
- Difficulty identifying colours and numbers.
- Difficulty in copying one's own name.
- Difficulty in learning geometric shapes.
- Slow pace in learning new words.
- Omission and inversion of sounds.
- Difficulty in acquiring basic spatial and temporal concepts.

IN THE 1ST CYCLE (1ST YEAR)

- Poor working memory.
- Difficulty in learning letters and words.
- Difficulty in identifying sounds.
- Difficulty in coordination.
- Loses or can't find his/her things
- Difficulty in forming letters
- Difficulty in copying a model
- Difficulty in painting.
- Doesn't know how to put his things away
- Refuses to read.
- Shows signs that he feels unhappy at school.
- Always finds excuses not to go to school.

IN THE 1ST AND 2ND CYCLES

- Reading is not fluent (hesitant and syllabic).
- At the phonological level, it is difficult to recognise phonemes (sounds) within words.
- Difficulty in decoding new or more difficult words.
- Difficulty in breaking down words into syllables.
- Difficulty in spelling words.
- Difficulty in spelling.
- In reading substitutes words (car for automobile…).

IN THE 3RD CYCLE

Continues with most of the signs mentioned and others appear:

- Frustration.

- Behavioural disturbances.

- Normal or superior competence in some subjects.

- Difficulty in attention and concentration.

NOTE:

It is important to note that they do not present all of these difficulties, but in some cases, the presence of two or three of these signs may warrant assessment.

IN SECONDARY SCHOOL

Continues with most of the signs mentioned and others appear:

- Needs more time to complete tasks, both at home and at school.

- Makes mistakes in reading.

- Requests help from colleagues to repeat information.

- Writes very little in relation to the knowledge he has on certain subjects.

- Has a poor general culture.

- Does not get much benefit from the many hours dedicated to study.

- Has difficulty copying part of a text

- Often fails to complete homework and tests.

- Feels unhappy because the difficulties encountered at school arise in other areas

IN UNIVERSITY

- Difficulty in remembering the timetable.

- Difficulty in planning and organising their work.

- Difficulty in being on time.

- Difficulty in writing a text, following a plan.

- Difficulty in maintaining in examinations/frequencies, the results that have in continuous assessment.

- Difficulty in reading and writing at the speed of other colleagues

2. **Know the 37 warning signs of dyslexia (Annex 3).**

3. **As a head teacher/ class teacher it is important to talk to the family to find out if the observed behaviours and difficulties are also experienced at home.**

4. **Signal the child for an evaluation by the school psychologist.**

5. Implement the defined measures to support learning and inclusion.

Measures to support learning and and inclusion

Additional Measures
- School year attendance by subjects.
- Significant curricular adaptations.
- Adaptations to the evaluation process.
- The individual transition plan.
- The development of structured teaching methodologies and strategies.
- The development of personal and social autonomy competencies.
- The allocation of support products.

Selective Measures
- Differentiated curricular pathways.
- Non-significant curricular adaptations.
- Psycho-pedagogical support.
- Anticipation and reinforcement of learning.
- Adaptations to the evaluation process.
- Tutorial support.

Universal Measures
- Pedagogical differentiation.
- Curricular accommodation.
- Curricular enrichment.
- The promotion of pro-social behaviour in educational settings inside and outside the classroom.
- The intervention with academic or behavioural focus in small groups.

Source: For the development of an inclusive school, DGE.

6. Know and be sensitive to the main sources of parental anxiety:

- Eventuality of a retention, due to pressure exerted by the school.

- Changes of cycle, from 1st to 2nd, from 2nd to 3rd and from 3rd to secondary school. This situation created a lot of anguish for parents. Ideally, parents should try to find out which schools are more open to these situations.

- The child's difficulties in following instructions, in concentrating, especially on the tasks that are asked of him. All this generates great frustration in the children and their parents. It is important to talk to other parents, so that they may understand that they are not alone and that they may share more efficient strategies.

- The need to recognize the differences.

- How to manage this anxiety? [Dyslexie – Guide pratique pour parents et tous ceux qui les acconpagnent", de Gavin Reid (2014, versão francesa), cit in Ribeiro, (2023) Guia para pais de crianças com dislexia.]

....

[Dyslexie – Guide pratique pour parents et tous ceux qui les acconpagnent", de Gavin Reid (2014, french version), cit in Ribeiro, Bedo A. (2023) Guia para pais de crianças com dislexia.]

APPENDIX 2

Pamphlet to support class/school community information

IT IS IMPORTANT

Look at the person first rather than their behaviour or disability.

Discover their strengths and their challenges.

WHAT NOT TO DO

- Call the person by the diminutive of their name.
- Ask the person to read aloud or expose them to situations where they are confronted with their difficulty in front of a group.
- Always giving instructions or material to read or forms to fill out.
- Rushing the completion of tasks, whether at home or at school.

DID YOU KNOW THAT?

Walt Disney
Pablo Picasso
Agatha Christie
Harrison Ford
Robbie Williams
Steven Spielberg

were/are dyslexic?

WE ARE ALL INVOLVED

All children matter and they really matter!

School is for each and every one.

UNESCO

inc4edu@gmail.com
https://edupa.pt/projeto-incedu/
facebook.com/Projeto Educação Inclusiva
incedu_inclusiveeducation

DYSLEXIA

Knowing to understand

Leaflet available to print (front and back).

WHAT IS IT?

It is a difficulty in learning to read, despite having a normal intelligence,

It is often accompanied by learning disabilities in writing, spelling, grammar and writing.

It is distinguished from other reading difficulties by:
- difficulty in reading persists into adulthood.
- the errors in reading and writing are of a peculiar and specific nature.
- there is a family incidence (hereditary).
- the difficulty exists in interpreting other symbols.

KNOW MORE ...

CHARACTERISTICS

They have difficulties in reading or understanding texts.

Have difficulty with written expression. It is difficult to read what he/she writes or makes many errors, omissions and substitutions.

They have difficulty concentrating, memorising or recalling facts and content learned.

They often expresses feelings of incapacity, inferiority and frustration.

It performs differently from others for non-school subjects and areas.

They present difficulties in balance, coordination, temporal and/or spatial orientation.

Have a slower learning pace. Takes time to construct sentences.

Write words in a strange way. Swaps letters with similar sounds or spellings.

CURIOSITIES

They are children with other highly developed skills such as: sensitivity, arts, athletics, mechanics, 3 dimensional visualisation, creative problem solving and intuitive skills

HOW CAN I HELP?

Give one instruction at a time. Speak simply and clearly.

Give the child the time he needs to think.

Use multi-sensory strategies.

Recognise the child's strengths and encourage their self-esteem.

Collaborate to ensure that the environment is quiet, without noise and distractions.

DYSLEXIA

Knowing to understand

WE ARE ALL INVOLVED

All children matter and they really matter!

School is for each and every one.

UNESCO

IT IS IMPORTANT

Look at the person first rather than their behaviour or disability.

Discover their strengths and their challenges.

WHAT NOT TO DO

- Call the person by the diminutive of their name.

- Ask the person to read aloud or expose them to situations where they are confronted with their difficulty in front of a group.

- Always giving instructions or material to read or forms to fill out.

- Rushing the completion of tasks, whether at home or at school.

DID YOU KNOW THAT?

were/are dyslexic?

Walt Disney
Pablo Picasso
Agatha Christie
Harrison Ford
Robbie Williams
Steven Spielberg

WHAT IS IT?

It is a difficulty in learning to read, despite having a normal intelligence.

It is often accompanied by learning disabilities in writing, spelling, grammar and writing.

It is distinguished from other reading difficulties by:

- difficulty in reading persists into adulthood.
- the errors in reading and writing are of a peculiar and specific nature.
- there is a family incidence (hereditary).
- the difficulty exists in interpreting other symbols.

KNOW MORE ...

CHARACTERISTICS

They have difficulties in reading or understanding texts.

Have difficulty with written expression. It is difficult to read what he/she writes or makes many errors, omissions and substitutions.

They have difficulty concentrating, memorising or recalling facts and content learned.

They often expresses feelings of incapacity, inferiority and frustration.

It performs differently from others for non-school subjects and areas.

They present difficulties in balance, coordination, temporal and/or spatial orientation.

Have a slower learning pace. Takes time to construct sentences.

Write words in a strange way. Swaps letters with similar sounds or spellings.

CURIOSITIES

They are children with other highly developed skills such as: sensitivity, arts, athletics, mechanics, 3 dimensional visualisation, creative problem solving and intuitive skills

HOW CAN I HELP?

Give one instruction at a time. Speak simply and clearly.

Give the child the time he needs to think.

Use multi-sensory strategies.

Recognise the child's strengths and encourage their self-esteem.

Collaborate to ensure that the environment is quiet, without noise and distractions.

APPENDIX 3 – THE 37 SIGNS FOR ASD - DYSLEXIA

AREAS	CHARACTERISTICS
GENERALITIES	• Apparently bright, above average intelligence, expresses himself well in orality, but is unable to read, write at his grade level. • Known as lazy, uncaring, immature, " lack of work" or " behavioural problems". • Their difficulties are not sufficient for an own or alternative curriculum. • Good IQ but has negative levels in assessments. Has more facility in oral than in writing. • Thinks he is dumb. Weak self-esteem. Dissimulates his weaknesses thanks to ingenious compensation strategies. • High level of frustration and stress in the face of reading and tests. • Gifted for the arts, theatre, music, sports, business, design, construction or engineering-related professions. • Often gets lost in the dream world. He is easily lost and has no sense of time passing. • Has difficulty being attentive. May appear hyperactive or absent-minded. • Learns most easily through manipulation, demonstrations, experimentation, observation and visual aids.
VISION, READING AND SPELLING	• Complains of dizziness, headache or stomach ache when reading. • Disoriented by letters, numbers, words, sequences or oral explanations. • When reading or writing, makes omissions, substitutions, repetitions, additions, transpositions, and inversions of letters, numbers, and/or words.Queixa-se de sentir ou ver movimentos não existentes quando lê ou escreve. • Gives the impression of having vision problems not confirmed by the ophthalmologist. • Excellent vision and very observant or else lack of binocular or peripheral vision. • Reads and rereads having great difficulty understanding.
HEARING AND LANGUAGE	• Hearing hypersensitivity. Hears things that were not said or not perceptible by others. Is easily distracted by noise. • Difficulty in formulating his thoughts. Expresses himself with telescoping sentences. Does not finish his sentences, stutters when under pressure. • Has difficulty pronouncing complex words, mixes up sentences, words and syllables when speaking.
GRAPHICS AND MOTOR SKILLS	• Has difficulty writing and copying. Holds pencil in an unusual way. Irregular or illegible writing. • Clumsy, poorly coordinated, not very skilled at ball games or team sports. Difficulty in fine or gross motor skills tasks. Subject to motion sickness in transport. • May be ambidextrous and often confuse right and left, or under and over..
MATHS AND TIME MANAGEMENT	• You have difficulty reading the time, managing your time, integrating information or tasks with sequences, arriving on time. • To count needs his fingers or other "accessories". Knows the answer but cannot put it in writing.Sabe contar mas Has difficulty counting objects and counting money. • Is good at arithmetic but has difficulty in problem solving. Blocks at the level of algebra and at higher levels of mathematics.
MEMORY AND COGNITION	• Excellent long-term memory for personal experiences, places and faces. • Poor memory for sequences, facts and information that have not been personally experienced. • Thinks primarily through pictures and in resenti rather than in sounds and words (little internal dialogue)
BEHAVIOUR, HEALTH, DEVELOPMENT AND PERSONALITY	• Extremely untidy or an order freak. • Either the jester in the room, the troublemaker or too discreet. • He was precocious or, on the contrary, lite in the stages of his development (crawling, walking, talking...). • Subject to otitis, allergies. • May be a sleeper or, on the contrary, light sleeper. Enuresia. • A heightened sense of justice. Very sensitive. Perfectionist. • Errors and symptoms increase significantly under pressure de incerteza, do tempo, do stress e do cansaço..

Source: Ribeiro, A. (2023) Guia para pais de crianças com dislexia.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

At **SEI CENTER** you will find a variety of information on dealing with learning difficulties such as dyslexia, dysorthography and dyscalculia. With the right guidance through videos, other testimonies, and games available here, it is possible to help these children to overcome challenges related to emotional development, with attention difficulties and to optimize their cognitive profile and study techniques and methods.

On the blog (updated monthly) you will also find diverse and very useful information about the best learning techniques and strategies for parents and teachers.

DISBEDO

DISLEX

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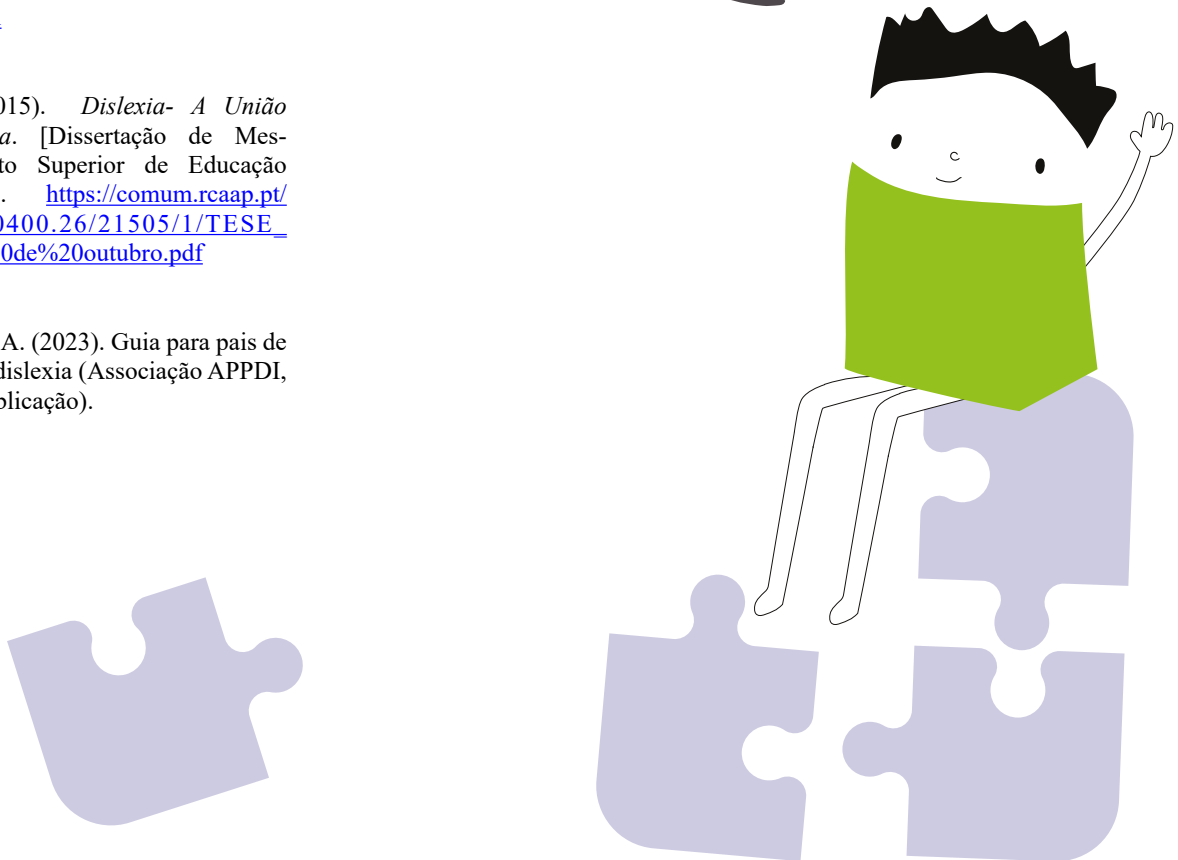
+ INCLUSIVE EDUCATION:
FROM REFLECTION TO ACTION

[GOOD PRACTICES MANUAL]

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN PRACTICE:

STUDENTS WITH ATTENTION
DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER

MODULE

07

MODULE 7

*"It is not a disturbance not to know what to do,
it is a disturbance not to do what one knows"*

Unknown author

7.1. KNOWING TO UNDERSTAND ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER (ADHD)

Attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is the most commonly diagnosed neurobehavioural disorder in school-age children (Cordinhã & Boavida, 2008). This condition is more easily diagnosed at this stage of the subject's life, much due to the greater demands, not only social but also academic. However, the diagnosis may also occur during adulthood (Perdilhão, et. al. 2009).

Studies show that there is a higher prevalence of this condition in male children (three to four times more frequent) than in female children. In females, the most common symptoms are inattention, while hyperactivity and impulsiveness are less intense. Given this evidence, the number of underdiagnosed cases in female children is thought to be significant (Perdilhão, et. al. 2009).

 There is a set of characteristics associated with this disorder which are reflected in behavioural change, as well as in the subject's normal development, with specific characteristics accentuated in terms of inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity (Branco, 2018), which are evidenced for a continuous period of six months in at least two of the following contexts (school, home, social situations) (Cordinhã & Boavida, 2008).
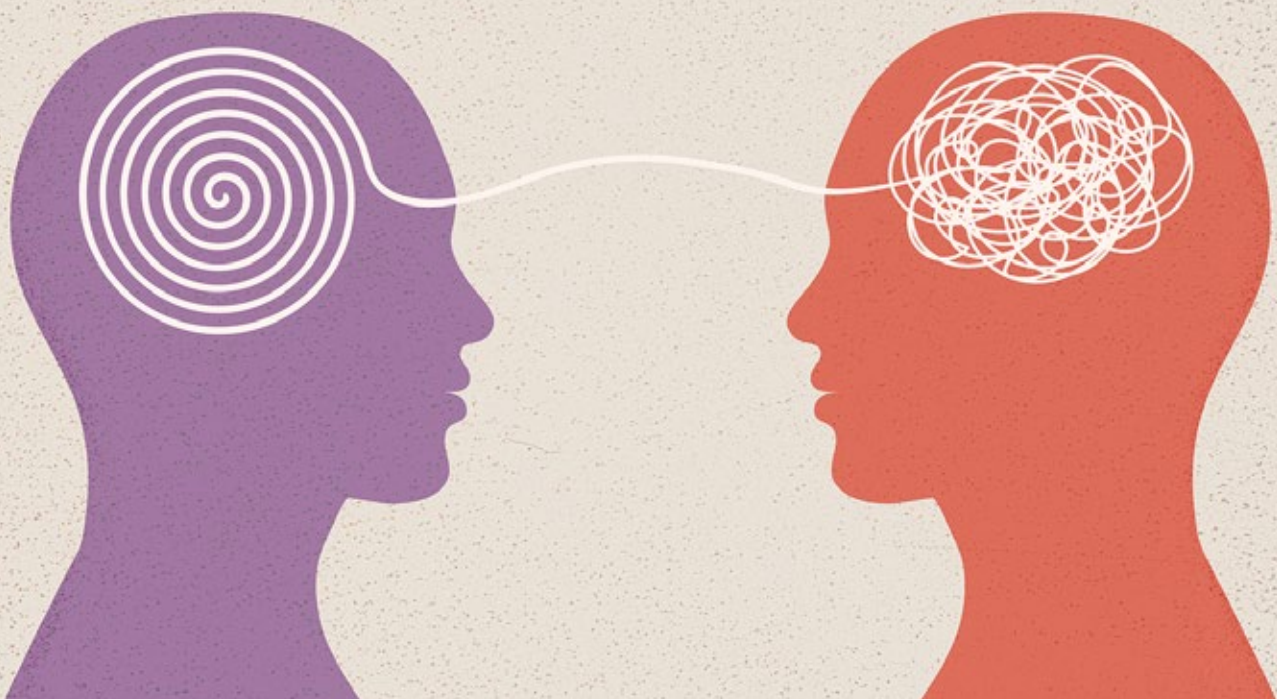
7.1.1 THE DIAGNOSIS

Diagnosis is not straightforward and easy to reach as the symptoms are non-specific, i.e. not inherent only to this condition. On the other hand, diagnosis may become difficult, since there are no medical tests (imaging or laboratory) that can confirm or exclude with precision the diagnosis of ADHD. Therefore, the clinical diagnosis involves an analysis based on behavioural criteria, always using multiple sources of information (parents, teachers, educators, among others). The key point of this stage is to ascertain not only activity levels, but also impulsiveness and attention deficit of the subject and how these interfere with the normal functioning of the various environments surrounding the subject (family, school, social).

It is important to bear in mind that the clinical picture may vary according to the age and development of the child, so the assessment and consequent diagnosis in children at an early age must be cautious.

For that purpose, the recommended evaluation criteria contained in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders of the American Academy of Psychiatry (DSM 5) are used. For the diagnosis to be confirmed, the subject must meet at least six criteria from one of the following categories:
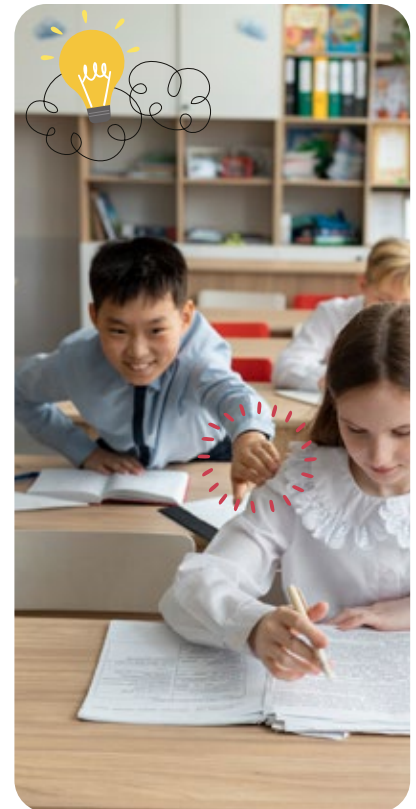
INATTENTION SYMPTOMS	IMPULSIVITY AND HYPERACTIVITY SYMPTOMS
• Easily forget to carry out daily tasks. • Being easily distracted by irrelevant stimuli. • To easily and frequently lose material necessary for the accomplishment of activities he/she has to carry out. • Avoids starting tasks that require too much attention. • Difficulty in organising tasks as well as activities. • Do not follow instructions and do not finish tasks. • Increased difficulty in concentrating on activities or tasks. • Lack of focus on details. make mistakes due to inattention.	• Hyperactivity. • Restlessness (excessive moving of hands and feet). • Not sitting up when they should. • Excessive behaviour (running, climbing, for example) in inappropriate situations. • Difficulty in engaging in activities, in a concentrated and calm way. • Talks excessively. • Hasty answers (they answer before completing the question). • Difficulty in waiting. • Interrupt others, or disturb them, interfering with the development of their activities/work.

We **must not neglect** to mention that although ADHD is mostly diagnosed in the school phase, some children may manifest characteristics at an earlier stage:

✓ Difficult temperament with presence of stubbornness.

✓ Defiant behaviours.

✓ Presence, in some situations, of language delay.

✓ Characteristics associated with Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

✓ Difficulties at learning level and sensory problems.
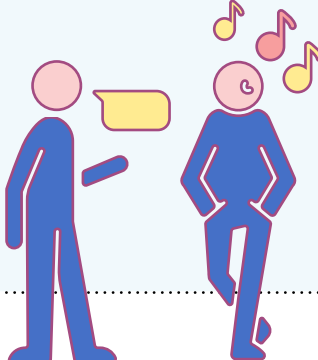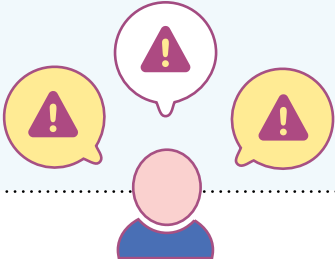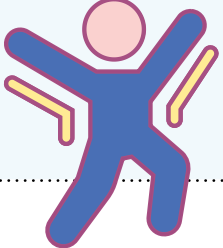
Despite the above, the symptoms associated with this disorder tend to diminish during the student's school period, especially in terms of hyperactivity and impulsivity symptoms. However, studies indicate that the attention deficit and the easy distraction remain, leading to situations of difficulty in impulse control, as well as in complying with instructions. This reality ends up causing slow performance of tasks and, consequently, the development of feelings of ineffectiveness, frustration and low self-esteem (Perdilhão, et. al. 2009).
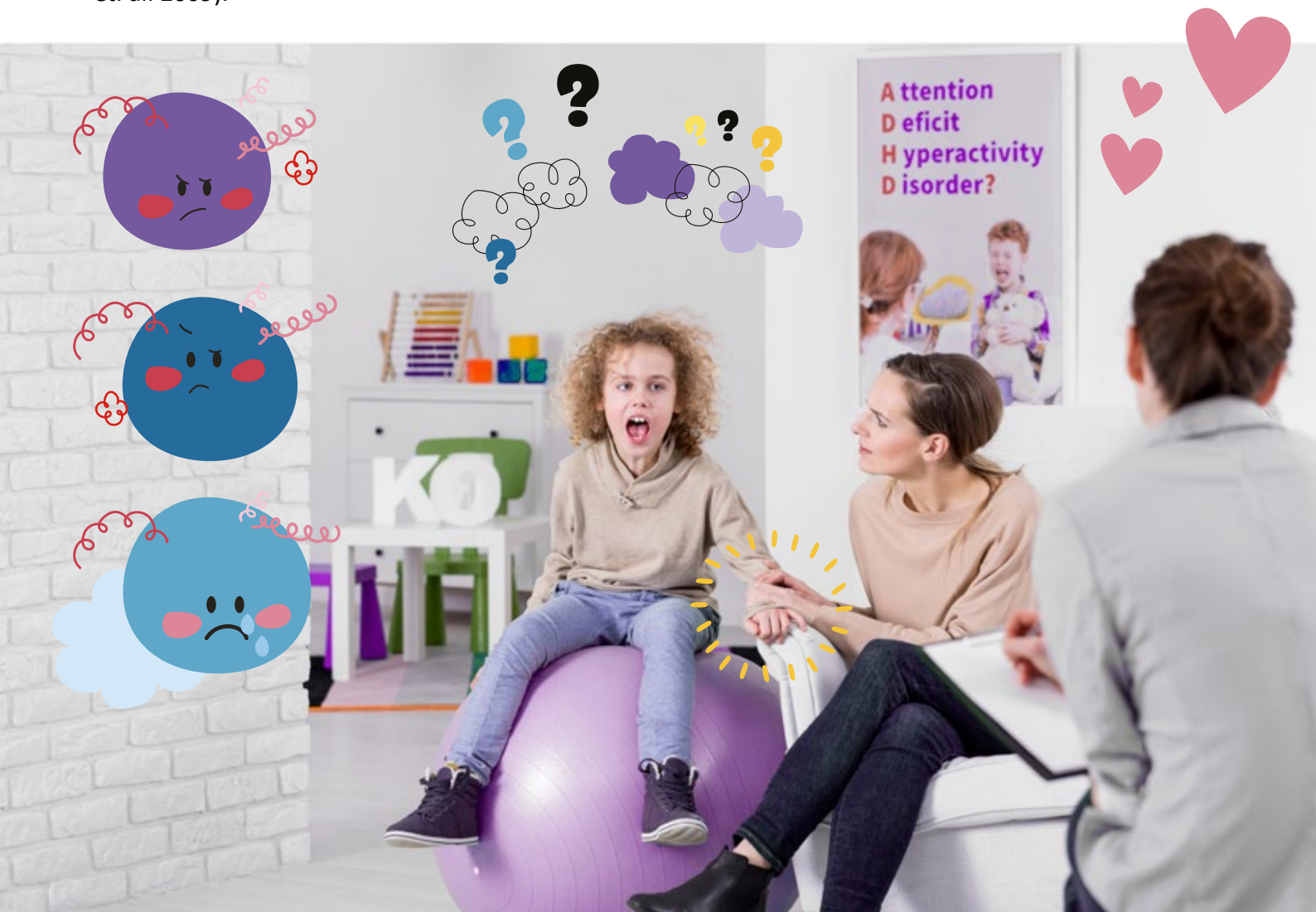
In addition to the above, in order to establish **a diagnosis of ADHD**, it is essential that the subject meets all of the following criteria:

QUANTITY:	DURATION OF SYMPTOMS:	ONSET:	CONTEXT:	EVIDENCE:	EXCLUSION:
presence of at least **6 of the 9** symptoms mentioned in category I (**inattention symptoms**), or category II (**hyperactivity and impulsivity symptoms**), or **both**.	pre-sence of symptoms during a **minimum period of 6 months**.	symptoms usually appear **before the age of 7** and especially before the age of 5.	manifes-tation of symptoms in **at least two con-texts/envi-ronments** (school, home or work).	clear evidence of the impact of ADHD on the subject's social, academic or pro-fessional level. The diagnosis implies not only evidence of the **gravity and frequency of the symptoms**, but also the interference that these have **in the several contexts** of the subject's life (home, school, work).	symptoms **do not occur exclusively** during a global deve-lopment disorder, schizophrenia or other psychoses **and are not better explai-ned** by another men-tal disorder (mood disorder, anxiety disorder, dissociative disorder or persona-lity disorder).

Three subtypes of ADHD can be considered (Cordinhã & Boavida, 2008), depending on the predominance of symptoms of inattention and hyperactivity-impulsivity:

COMBINED **OR** MIXED	PREDOMINANTLY INATTENTIVE	PREDOMINANTLY HYPERACTIVE AND IMPULSIVE
both types of symptoms coexist, fulfilling at least six of the nine behaviours of both categories	when fulfilling at least six of the nine inattention behaviours	when fulfilling at least six of the nine hyperactivity-impulsivity behaviours

EVALUATION

When the diagnosis of ADHD is suspected, the subject should be carefully assessed by a multidisciplinary team. This type of process should include a medical approach (clinical history) and a behavioural approach (focusing on the three components associated with ADHD:

attention, activity and impulsiveness). However, parents should also be interviewed about the behaviours included in the diagnostic criteria defined by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders of the American Academy of Psychiatry (DSM 5), already discussed in this module.

MEDICAL EVALUATION:

- Identification and characterization of symptoms (attention deficit, agitation, impulsivity) over time and in different contexts (home, school, extra-curricular activities).

- Subject's temperament: aggressiveness, low self-esteem, opposition, antisocial behavior and frustration.

- Emotional skills, excessive fears and depressed mood.

- Sleep routines.

- Information about your academic performance (year attended, retentions, areas of greater difficulty, educational support, etc.)

- Relationship with peers and communication skills.

- Family environment: stress factors, recent changes in the socio-familial level, traumatic experiences; discipline rules, family social context and parental expectations.

PERSONAL BACKGROUND:	FAMILY BACKGROUND:
- Motor and language development. - Difficulties at school level. - Pre-, peri-, and post-natal risk factors for brain injury (examples: exposure to alcohol or drugs during pregnancy, prematurity or low birth weight, infections or trauma to the central nervous system, etc.).	- Family history of ADHD. - Psychiatric disorders (depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety, tics). - Genetic illnesses. - Social context of the subject's family.

It is important that, together with this assessment, a neurological examination is included, as well as a careful assessment, not only of the psychomotor development of the child, but also of its hearing and vision. To emphasize that the evaluation based on the direct observation of the child's behaviour may prove insufficient and, in this sense, one may resort to behavioural scales, namely the Conner's (aimed at parents and teachers) and Achenbach's (aimed at parents, teachers and the subject himself) questionnaires, which provide important information, not only regarding the subject's behaviour, but also in terms of hyperactivity, attention and opposition behaviours.

Also associated with assessment, whenever necessary, cognitive and psycho-pedagogical assessments may also be used in cases of specific learning difficulties or suspected cognitive deficit (Cordinhã & Boavida, 2008).

RISC FACTORS

There is no specific cause of ADHD, but there is evidence that the combination of genetic and environmental factors may be at the origin of the development of this condition (Yemula, et al, 2022).

According to Cordinhã & Boavida (2008) there is a set of risk factors associated with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, namely:

- ✓ Genetic factors: the development of this condition can be explained from the point of view of genetics. The probability of developing this condition is higher in case there is a family history of it. This is likely due to several genes involved.

- ✓ Pre- and peri- natal factors such as exposure to alcohol and drugs during the gestational period.

- ✓ Neurological disorders, e.g. epilepsy.

- ✓ Disrupted family background, with presence of parental conflict.

- ✓ Parental mental health, e.g. maternal depression, substance abuse and cognitive deficits.

- ✓ "Relational (severe early affective deprivation, institutionalisation, family incapacity to understand, contain and organise the child's behaviour)".

Despite the relevance of the environmental context, there is no scientific study that demonstrates that isolated social problems may be at the origin of ADHD (Barkley, 2015). Evidence makes clear the importance of genetic factors related to brain development and function, as well as non-genetic neurological factors, in the origin of this disease.

7.1.2 COMORBIDITIES

Comorbidities associated with this medical condition are very common. More than half of the subjects diagnosed present other developmental, psychological or medical conditions that coexist or overlap with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. We can highlight a few, as examples:
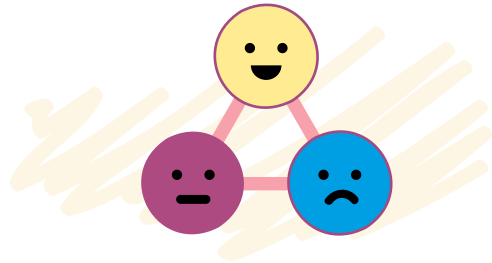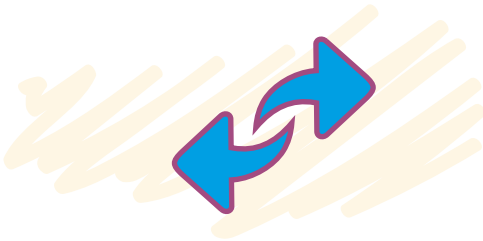
OPPOSITIONAL DISORDER

A fairly common condition in subjects diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. Typically, the child exhibits characteristics such as stubbornness, hostility and often:

☑ Loses his/her temper and argues with adults.

☑ Displays defiant behaviour towards adults and/or refuses to follow instructions given.

☑ Blames others for his/her mistakes.

☑ Gets upset very easily.

☑ Shows anger frequently.

☑ Displays vindictive behaviours.

It is important that parents and carers adopt a positive behavioural approach to this situation. It is crucial that they acquire skills and strategies, through effective parenting programmes and participation in parents' groups, in order to better deal with this reality and help their children.

BEHAVIOURAL DISORDER

Condition where the child presents a persistent pattern in breaking social rules/ norms. As characteristics, we can mention:

☑ Theft.

☑ Destruction of property.

☑ Assaults.

☑ Cruelty to people and animals.

In order to help children in this situation, parents and guardians should seek training to provide them with support:

➢ *Various strategies to deal with the child's challenging behaviours.*

➢ *Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and/or Family Therapy.*

DEVELOPMENTAL COORDINATION DISORDER

Many children diagnosed with ADHD are also diagnosed with Developmental Coordination Disorder. This is a condition that causes difficulties in coordination with repercussions in the subject's daily life. The clinical features are:

☑ Poor handwriting.

☑ Difficulties in dressing (tying shoelaces, buttoning a shirt. using the zips of clothes).

☑ Difficulty in using cutlery (constant struggle in using it).

☑ Problems related to balance, affecting the development of certain skills such as riding a bicycle. They also show poor performance in sports.

Children with this condition are often considered clumsy, however they can be helped through the development of appropriate therapies provided by occupational therapists or physiotherapists..

MOOD DISORDER

This is a mental disorder that causes sudden and atypical changes in mood, energy, activity levels, affecting the ability to perform daily life tasks. From a clinical point of view, the subject may present the following symptoms:

MANIC PHASE:

☑ Heightened feelings of euphoria.

☑ Difficulties sleeping.

☑ Talking too fast on diversified subjects.

☑ Presence of anxiety, irritability and/or sensitivity.

☑ Among others.

DEPRESSIVE PHASE:

☑ Feeling of excessive sadness.

☑ Uncontrolled sleep (sleeping a lot, or not sleeping at all).

☑ Difficulty concentrating.

☑ Memory lapses.

☑ Negative thoughts (thinking about death and suicide).

☑ Among others.

SPECIFIC LEARNING DISORDER

In 25 to 40% of cases of ADHD will have specific learning difficulties:

☑ Reading (known as dyslexia) - the most frequent, characterized by problems with accuracy and fluency in word recognition, decoding and spelling.

☑ Writing (known as dysorthography) - difficulties in composing, structuring and planning the text, which is characterized by spelling and grammatical errors.

☑ Mathematics (known as dyscalculia) - characterized by problems processing numerical information, learning arithmetic facts and performing calculations fluently and accurately.

Children with this condition need curriculum accommodation in order to achieve their academic goals. It is therefore crucial that they receive adequate support at school.

DEPRESSION

Depression is one of the comorbidities present in children with ADHD. It is important to stress that being in a depressive state transcends the state of sadness. When we talk about depression in children, we must consider the following symptoms, stressing that they must be present for a long period of time:

☑ Constant and motiveless crying.

☑ Sleeping problems.

☑ Loss of interest in activities which were pleasurable until then.

☑ Little energy, spirit and lack of appetite.

Faced with this situation, parents/guardians should be attentive and seek medical advice. It is also important that they liaise with the school, in order to understand if there is something at school that may be the origin of such a condition. This articulation is crucial for the child to overcome this condition.

ANXIETY DISORDER

It coexists in up to 30% of ADHD cases, characterized by the presence of feelings of high tension, worry and insecurity, and may be accompanied by physical complaints such as palpitations, dry mouth, stomach ache, increased blood pressure, among others.

OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDER

Reflects on obsessive and compulsive behaviour towards something or something. This condition causes great distress.

SOME EXAMPLES OF OBSESSIVE BEHAVIOURS:

☑ Exaggerated worry about illness and getting sick.

☑ Worry about losing control, among others.

SOME EXAMPLES OF COMPULSIVE BEHAVIOURS:

☑ Frequent and excessive cleaning of clothes.

☑ Repeated and excessive checking of something, e.g. checking whether the door is locked.

☑ Putting things in order.

SENSORY PROBLEMS

Some children diagnosed with ADHD have sensory problems, visible in atypical sensory responses, such as exaggerated reactions to external stimuli (hypersensitivity) (Lane & Reynolds, 2019). Nevertheless, the inability to respond to sensory stimuli from the environment, can be perceived according to the following three subtypes, to be mentioned:

☑ Sensory hypersensitivity.

☑ Sensory hypo-responsiveness.

☑ Sensory search.

In cases of ADHD diagnosis, it is more frequent to find Hyper responsiveness with incidence:

◊ *In the tactile system, tendency to avoid textures and stiffness in the fabric of clothes.*

◊ *Auditory, tendency, for example, to cover the ears in noisy environments.*

◊ *Visual, avoiding, for example, places with a lot of light.*

◊ *Olfactory, discomfort in the presence of strong smells.*

Alterations in sensory modulation in children diagnosed with ADHD are related to inappropriate behaviour in different environments (school, home, social, for example). They are also directly related to the student's failure and performance at school (Koziol & Budding, 2012).

AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

This is a neurodevelopmental disorder often present in children diagnosed with ADHD. The autism spectrum disorder, brings challenges in two aspects:

☑ Communication and social interaction.

☑ Repetitive behaviors.

For more information on this topic, see module 5 of this manual.

TOURETTE'S SYNDROME

This is a rare neurological disorder characterised by the presence of simple or complex motor or vocal tics. Drugs are one way of alleviating the symptoms, however other treatments may include psychotherapy and behavioural therapy.

TICS

It is a condition that can include both motor and vocal tics, these often come and go and are rooted in stress. Motor tics include: atypical repetitive body movements, such as eye blinking, shoulder shrugging, facial twitching, among others.

On the other hand, vocal tics can include, for example, clearing the throat or coughing.

INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENTAL DISORDER

This is a disorder which starts in the period of the subject's development. Its characteristics are the presence of deficits, not only at functional level (reasoning, planning, problem solving and acquisition of learning), but also at the adaptive level (personal and social independence).

7.1.3. MYTHS AND TRUTHS ABOUT ADHD

◇ **ADHD is an invented disease.**

Currently this medical disorder is considered one of the most researched to date. It has been extensively studied and there is scientific evidence that it causes damage to neurological functioning, motor problems, delayed neuro-psychomotor development, cognitive dysfunction, and impaired performance at work and in academic activities.

◇ **ADHD equals hyperactivity.**

These issues are distinct. Being hyperactive, agitated, does not mean you suffer from this disorder. Agitation may just be a personality trait of the subject.

⋛ **M Y T H S** ⋚

It's an invented disease   ADHD = Hyperactivity   Passes with age   Ritalin is the cure

⋛ **T R U T H S** ⋚

Psychology helps but does not solve   It is not a diagnosis created with purpose for medicating children   It persists throughout life and can lead to problems at work and in the family

7.1.4. INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

As we have seen so far, ADHD is not easy to understand and/or diagnose. It is therefore a complex condition, which requires a set of intervention methods and strategies.

The intervention will always depend on the characteristics presented by the subject. If the child has a normal neurodevelopment, the intervention will involve, above all, the promotion of positive and appropriate parental attitudes in the relationship with the child, namely the sharing of information about the characteristics associated with this condition, as well as the advice of a greater approximation and relationship between parents and school.

On the other hand, and if the child has difficulties in relationships with peers, school performance and adaptation to environments, it is essential that there is a deeper intervention.

AT FAMILY LEVEL:

It is fundamental that ALL of us understand that a child diagnosed with ADHD is not a problem child, but rather a child who needs support and understanding. In this sense, it is important that the family adopt a set of behaviours and strategies in order to help their child. Let us consider the following strategies:

♥ Understand the child's strengths and weaknesses.

♥ Parents should remain calm, avoiding moments of discussion with the child. If the child does something wrong, they should not shout. It is important to understand that shouting or punishing are behaviours that do not work and will only harm the child.

♥ As parents of a child with ADHD, they should give frequent and immediate feedback, since children do not always know if they are behaving well or not.

♥ Parents should use positive reinforcement frequently, as well as praise for good behaviour.

♥ Explain and demystify the issues associated with ADHD, for example, the idea that the child is "bad".

♥ Adopt positive behaviours towards the child's condition.

♥ Establish well defined rules, as well as setting limits.

♥ Promote a close relationship between parents and school.

♥ As parents of a child with ADHD, you should use reward instead of punishment. Good behaviour should be rewarded by, for example, allowing the child to do something he likes. Material rewards should not be used, opting instead for rewards such as play activities, hugs or praise.

♥ Transmit to the child that they don't like the child's bad behaviour and don't pass on the idea that they don't like the child as a person.

♥ Allow the child to work at his/her own pace.

♥ Encourage parents to seek out programmes, the aim of which is the acquisition of relationship reinforcement strategies. These are seen as important tools in managing the relationship with children with ADHD.

By way of example, here are **some programmes available** in English:

- ⮕ 123 Magic - offers parents, pediatricians, mental health professionals, grandparents, teachers, and even babysitters a simple and gentle - yet firm - approach to managing the behavior of children ages 2 to 12, with and without specific educational needs. With over 1.8 million copies sold and translated into over twenty languages,1-2-3 Magic has consistently been the #1 child-discipline book on Amazon.com. The *1-2-3 Magic Parenting* programs also include the popular *1-2-3 Magic Teen and All About ADHD*. Since 1984, Dr. Phelan, founder of the program has spoken to hundreds of thousands of parents and professionals.

- ⮕ Triple P - created in Australia it is one of the most studied programmes, aimed at parents of children aged 0-12 and teenagers aged 12-16.

- ⮕ Incredible Years - Webster – Stratton, developed in the United States and also much studied, is aimed at children between 0 and 12 years of age.

- ⮕ Programa Parental STAR, developed by Fox & Fox, is a preventative as well as educational programme that uses family strengths.

Spanish Programme:

- ⮕ Parenting Education Programme "Building Families" by Maria José Rodrigo of the University of La Laguna aimed at individuals between the ages of 0 and 18.

Some programs in portuguese:

- ⮕ Parental Education Programme "Criança", by Maria Filomena Gaspar is aimed at parents with children aged between 2 and 8 years old.

- ⮕ Programme "Mission C," created by Ana Melo, Isa Gomes, Joana Prego and Verónica Parente is aimed at children and teenagers between the ages of 13 and 16. It consists of 20 sessions for young people and their families. In this programme, families will face several challenges, namely those focused on dimensions related to emotional, vocational and family development. This programme arose from the School4All Monção project and is run by the technical team of the Family Support and Parental Counselling Centre of the Family Support Office.

⮕ The Incredible Years Program, for parents seeks to reduce family risk factors by promoting parenting skills, strengthening families and increasing their understanding of various aspects of child development and the different temperamental characteristics of the child. It is aimed at parents/other carers of children aged between 3 and 8 years old and consists of 14 weekly sessions (20 for parents of children with a diagnosis) lasting approximately 2 hours.

SCHOOL LEVEL:

♥ Enhance the relationship with a reference figure (teacher, educator).

♥ Carry out pedagogical assessment, development and implementation of a study plan suitable to the student's real needs and interests.

♥ Evaluate the presence of difficulties and require specific intervention (speech therapy, psychomotricity, for example).

♥ Implementation of strategies that help control inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity (behavioural therapeutic strategies, educational, family therapy, etc.)..

We had the opportunity to address a set of strategies that are essential when dealing with ADHD issues. Nevertheless, and due to the complexity inherent to this disorder, it is important to address therapies, which are also essential for improving ADHD symptoms. It is important to mention that each child is one child, with its own personal characteristics, interests and goals and, therefore, it is up to the team accompanying the child to select and adapt the most appropriate responses. In this sense, we highlight the following therapies:

Behavioural therapy	Cognitive behavioural therapy
This is an intervention aimed at re-educating the child in the behavioural, emotional and cognitive domains, with a view to reducing inappropriate behaviours and enhancing adjusted behaviours. To this end, therapists use mainly playful and expressive activities (Rocha, 2012).	This type of intervention is based on stimulating the child to use self-directed speech and self-reinforcement as problem-solving strategies, as well as motivational strategies, in order to develop self-control mechanisms for their impulsive behaviour.

7.2. LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

ADHD has implications for learning acquisition as well as for language. Children diagnosed with this condition normally present difficulties in writing, reading and mathematics, not because they have a lower intellectual capacity, but because of the attention, hyperactivity and impulsiveness problems characteristic of this disorder. There are some characteristics associated with the above-mentioned **problems that teachers and parents should be aware of:**

READING AND WRITING	MATHS	ORALITY
• Difficulty in recognising words by their shape. • Difficulty in reading comprehension. • Comprehension problems due to poor working memory.	• Most students with this disorder have difficulty with mental arithmetic. • Difficulty in specific areas of mathematics (in some cases). • Presence of dyscalculia (in some cases).	• They express themselves in a very particular way. • Difficulties in expressing themselves orally, due to difficulties at the level of attention, memory and executive control. • Difficulty in selecting the contents to be expressed (they get lost in irrelevant details). • Interrupted speech, frequently interrupted by hesitations, such as "hummm" that serve as a stick to disguise the difficulty in finding the appropriate word or expression for their speech. • Difficulty in adapting the speech to the occasion and the interlocutor due to lack of vocabulary and oral language skills.

It is fundamental that children with this diagnosis receive the appropriate attention and follow-up so that their normal development is not conditioned. According to Maia & Verejão, **an inadequate and not timely intervention may lead to:**

☒ Low self-esteem on the part of the student.

☒ Difficulty in the acquisition of learning.

☒ Presence of emotional problems.

☒ Difficulties in the relationship with family members and peers.

On the other hand, a timely and correct diagnosis together with an education adapted to the real needs of these children are essential factors for these children to develop positively and happily. It is important to mention the role of the families, as well as their relationship with the school.

7.3. EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder are challenged daily in various contexts, including the educational context. Therefore, it is crucial to adopt a set of strategies so that these children are included and feel happy and fulfilled in the school environment. Let us take into consideration the following strategies:
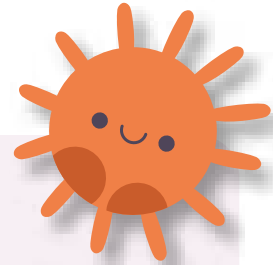
CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

- Ensure students are seated close to the teacher and away from sources of distraction (windows, radiators, fans...).

- Establish clear rules regarding the functioning of the classroom environment.

- Provide a quiet classroom environment with a small class size.

- Provide specialised educational support, always considering the student's needs, interests and potential.

- Avoid as far as possible sources of distraction (visual and auditory).

- To provide a place in the classroom where the student can work on his/her own, if necessary.

- Give breaks when necessary.

- Carry out assessment during the morning.

- Carry out tasks that require more concentration during the morning.

- Keep the student's work area free from unnecessary material.

- Develop tasks that involve some motor activity.

- The teacher should take care to give short, clear instructions, repeating them several times.

- Support the organisation of thought.

- Encourage the student to participate in educational activities.

- Avoid as much as possible the exposure of the child to situations where he/she may disorientate him/herself, such as queues.

- The teacher should take care to plan homework and, whenever possible, should have parental support.

- The teacher should take care to keep the classroom structured.

- Review the previous day's work, in order to consolidate what has been covered.

- Allow extra time to complete tasks.

- Use appealing materials such as presentations, drawings, objects, etc.

- Be careful not to use visual stimuli or write slogans on the blackboard while talking about a certain topic.

- Ask, whenever possible, for the participation of the student.

- Use visual organisers.

- Use group learning or learning in pairs.

- Ask students to carry out tasks such as erasing the blackboard, as well as exercises to reduce tension (moving their feet, scribbling in a notebook, for example).

- Allow the student to carry out the assessment over several moments, allowing for short periods of concentration.

It is important to remember that students with ADHD, due to the particularities inherent to this disorder, need a set of clear rules, which need to be enunciated and frequently reminded. Therefore, every day, at the beginning of each lesson, the teacher should remind the students of the classroom rules, as well as the consequences of not complying with them. It is essential to keep in mind that all rules directed specifically at children with ADHD should be done in private.

Children with ADHD need routines and tend to show resistance to the unexpected. Therefore, it is essential to draw up a daily plan with the activities and tasks to be developed by the student. It is also important to instil in the child the habit of making lists of the tasks to be carried out each day, as well as the material needed for such tasks.

PLAYGROUND ENVIRONMENT

The presence of unstructured times may be harmful to children diagnosed with ADHD, since they may lead to difficulties in self-control and self-management of emotions and behaviours. Thus, when students are enjoying the playground space, it is essential to encourage structured activities, such as traditional games, skipping rope, among others. These work very well with primary school students.

Nevertheless, it is crucial to consider communication in the playground space. Thus, **we should consider the following suggestions:**

- ☼ Rules should be clear, direct and short, e.g. "walk in front of the swing, not behind".

- ☼ The tone of voice to be calm.

- ☼ Priority should be given to eye contact.

- ☼ Close relationships should be established between the student and the teachers/carers so that the child can share his/her likes and interests.

- ☼ Giving positive verbal reinforcement. For example, praise when the child successfully completes a play activity.

7.3.1 PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES

Some general, pedagogical strategies for students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD):

AT THE LEVEL OF MEMORY:

- Ask students to repeat the teacher's instruction, or share it with a colleague, before the task is done so that they do not forget it.

- At the end of, or during the completion of a task, the teacher should take care to give positive reinforcement through praise, or by awarding prizes, such as stars in the notebook. It is important to note that the teacher's behaviour should be continuous and immediate.

- The teacher should not criticise or point out the errors inherent in the student's performance.

- Assign the student and the rest of the class various tasks. It is important to bear in mind that working in groups and giving students the opportunity to choose the activities they want to do will arouse the students' interest and motivation.

- Use visual and/or oral signals, previously agreed upon with the student and the teacher, in order for the student to understand what the teacher wants from him/her. for example: the touch on the shoulder of the student may mean a request to return to focus.

- Labels, underlining the most important parts of a certain task. This suggestion is also valid for written assessment.

ORGANISATION AND STUDY METHODS:

- Share with the student strategies of study organisation, so that he/she can more easily develop study habits. Encourage the use of diaries, post-it notes, calendars, audio reminders, or other tools, namely technological ones, that the student finds useful.

- Whenever possible, help the student in the organisation of his/her notebook, lockers and desk.

- Suggest to the parents and the student himself to separate the material of each subject by colour. Example: the maths material with red colour (cover the book with red colour, for example).

- Encourage the use of folders, in order to file all the important material, for example documents addressed to parents. This strategy will prevent the loss of important documents.

- Establish a means of communication between parents and school, e.g. using a diary.

- Provide time management support for tasks that require long-term performance. For example, when completing an assignment due in 30 days, the teacher should break the assignment down into smaller tasks.

INFORMATION PROCESSING:

- Use graphic organisers, so that the student can better understand the task.

- Allowing, instead of traditional written tests, diversified evaluation moments: oral presentations, manual work, for example.

- Encouraging the use of technology which may help the student in the acquisition of learning, focus and motivation. For example, using the recording of lessons, or the use of the computer during lessons.

- Allowing and respecting the breaks between tasks. For example: propose a pair work before a whole class discussion on the topic.

- Always respect the student's time when completing an assignment.
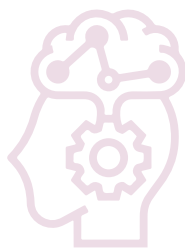
SELF-MONITORING:

- Anticipate possible learning difficulties that may arise and structure solutions.

- Use audio-visual techniques to signal transitions or changes in activities/tasks, for example: speaking loudly and making hand signals to remind students to change from one activity to another, or the end of it.

- Allowing the student to stand up at certain times, previously agreed with the teacher. ADHD students need motor activity at certain times, so it is crucial that the teacher does some activities, such as: asking them to erase the blackboard, asking them to fetch some material, etc.

SUMMARY TABLE
SOME STRATEGIES TO CONSIDER, ACCORDING TO GARCIA (2013):

	STRATEGIES	AUTHORS
Arrangement of the classroom	• Seat the student in the room at the front desks to avoid distractions. • Sitting so that the student has a good view of body language and facial expressions while the teacher is speaking. • Sitting the student next to one or more model students (positive role model)..	Lopes e Silva (2010) Vásquez (1997) Sosin (2006) Robin (2009)
Instructions	• Give clear and precise instructions. • Reinforce instructions by maintaining eye contact. • Simplify complicated instructions. Break them down into steps.	Sosin (2006) Antunes (2009) Kutsher (2011)
Communication	• Establish frequent communication with the family. • Use praise rather than criticism.	Sosin (2006) Robin (2009) Lopes e Silva (2010)
Classes	• Use visual association and written repetition to improve memory. • Use multimedia. • Keep verbal discourse short and to the point. • Use direct involvement, physical manipulation and manual activities to improve motivation, interest and memory. • Include various activities in each lesson. • Encourage cooperative learning and peer coaching • Provide periodic breaks during lessons. • Allow some physical movement (e.g. shaking legs, going to the board). • Use some computer programmes to work on problems.	Sosin (2006) Dendy (2011)
Works	• Allow more time for testing. • Divide the research papers into small segments. • Set different dates for the delivery of each segment.	Sosin (2006) Dendy (2011) Robin (2009)
Organisation	• Make organisation and study skills part of the educational programme. • Use diaries to record tasks. • Use clearly visible calendars at workplaces with dates for tests and presentations.	Sosin (2006) Robin (2009) Kutsher (2011) Antunes (2009)

SPECIFIC STRATEGIES ACCORDING TO THE CURRICULAR UNITS:

Portuguese

- Encouraging students to re-read and re-write their texts, so that they develop strategies for self-correction.

- Creating collective writing moments. This promotes writing in students with ADHD (figure 1).

- Encourage the student to write texts that can be read as well as used in situations outside the classroom context, e.g. recipes, travel guides, etc.

- Encourage and promote reading moments in the student on a regular basis.

- The teacher should bring different books to the classroom, as well as providing the student with frequent trips to the school library.

Mathematics
according to Silva et, al (2016):

From their first contact with mathematics, ADHD students have difficulty in solving simple subtraction, addition and division operations. This difficulty stems from attention deficit, as well as organisation. Therefore, the teacher should:

- Stimulate the student's interest in learning mathematics, by demonstrating the usefulness of a certain subject in daily life.

- Use materials that capture the students' attention, namely technology .

- Introduce play, in a planned way, as a method of teaching mathematics.

Physical Education

Due to their restlessness, physical education classes are an asset for students with ADHD, as it allows the student to release their energy. It is important to bear in mind that, due to the characteristics of pupils with ADHD, group games can be confusing for these children due to excessive activity, but they can benefit more from individual activities. In this sense, it is important for physical education teachers to consider the following strategies:

- Maintaining disciplined, clear and concrete attitudes.

- Giving feedback constantly, as well as concrete suggestions, so that the student can develop appropriate behaviour in the space.

- Provide and work with moments of relaxation and stretching.

- Developing varied activities in different spaces (dance room, swimming pool, basketball court, etc).

- Providing activities that work on winning and losing for students with ADHD (football, handball, paddle tennis, etc.).

- Developing psychomotor activities (walking, running, jumping) in order to improve not only overall motor coordination, but also fine motor coordination, balance, laterality, body, temporal and spatial awareness, which are important for carrying out everyday tasks.

Science

- Promote, whenever possible, lessons in a natural environment, according to the subject to be taught. For example, searching for perennial and deciduous plants in the school garden.

- Dynamic classes, using diversified materials, in order to capture the attention and interest of students with ADHD.

- Use of laboratory space, whenever possible.
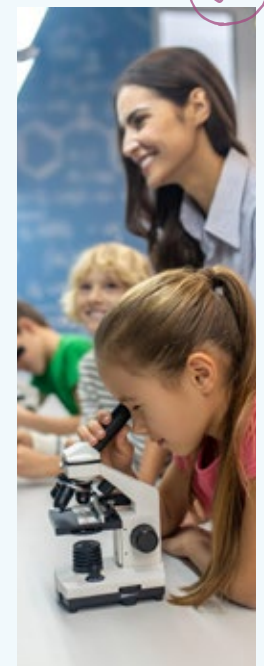
7.4. EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

Educational resources are concrete, manipulable tools for teaching purposes. They are a support whose function is to assist not only the student's thinking, but also their imagination. Nevertheless, it allows for a closer approach of the student to reality (Schmitz, 1998, cited in. Costa et. al, 2015). However, it is essential to highlight that the pedagogical resource is not, by itself, something that promotes teaching, being crucial the presence of the teacher figure, in order to provide teaching opportunities to the student (Silvia, 2010, cited in. Costa et. al, 2015). It is also important to emphasize that it is imperative that the teacher selects and/or builds the resource according to the students' needs and characteristics, so that they can access a better acquisition of learning and, consequently, a better performance (Audi, 2006, cited in, Costa et. al, 2015).

When addressing the issue of educational resources aimed at students with ADHD, the literature mentions playful activities a beneficial for children with this condition, since it promotes development, thinking, and concentration. According to Cunha (2012), play is an important and effective tool for the teaching and acquisition of learning in children with ADHD, since:

♥ Attenuates and minimizes problems related to inattention, as well as irritability.

♥ Minimizes the child's hyperactive behaviors.

Here are some resources that help promote learning:

WORK ON GEOMETRIC FIGURES:

Organize the children in a circle and explore with the children their knowledge of geometric figures and colours. Use paper or cardboard with various colours, with each colour corresponding to a specific geometric figure. Afterwards, show the students and ask them to identify the geometric figure.

ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES AS A WAY OF STIMULATING CONCENTRATION:

Activities such as painting, sculpting or drawing allow children to express their emotions with minimal distractions, as they require a great deal of concentration. This type of activity allows the child not only to control their hyperactivity, but also to control their impulsiveness.

USE OF THE "FLIPPED CLASSROOM" METHODOLOGY:

This is a teaching methodology where the logic of traditional classes is inverted. In other words, the student does at home the activities traditionally carried out in the classroom context, and, on the other hand, carries out in the classroom the projects, activities carried out at home.

This teaching methodology allows the student to assimilate the contents better, since he had to develop a research work and previous study at home, through the materials prepared and selected by the teacher, thus allowing the opportunity to put into practice what was previously studied through the realization of projects, group work or other dynamics proposed by the teacher.

It is important to note that this methodology stimulates the interest and curiosity of all students, in particular students with ADHD.

GAMIFICATION OF EDUCATION:

This is a dynamic that consists of applying common tools and strategies in games for other purposes, namely teaching and learning. In this sense, the adoption of this method in education implies the adoption of logic, rules, as well as, design to motivate and enrich the teaching and learning processes.

This is a methodology that places the student at the centre of the educational action, as they actively participate in their teaching process, as well as in the construction of their own knowledge, through dynamic, practical and fast educational processes.

Here are some platforms that enable **free gamified** educational activities:

DUOLINGO:

A number, letter or syllable is written on each star. The aim of the game is to match the required sequence. It is suitable for pupils aged between 5 and 9 years and involves portuguese and maths.

EDUCATIONAL FLIGHT:

A number, letter or syllable is written on each star. The aim of the game is to match the required sequence. It is suitable for pupils aged between 5 and 9 years and involves portuguese and maths.

CONCRETE DIDACTICAL MODELS:

For example, in the case of natural sciences, use didactical models of the human body, in order to better explain its functioning, as well as its components.
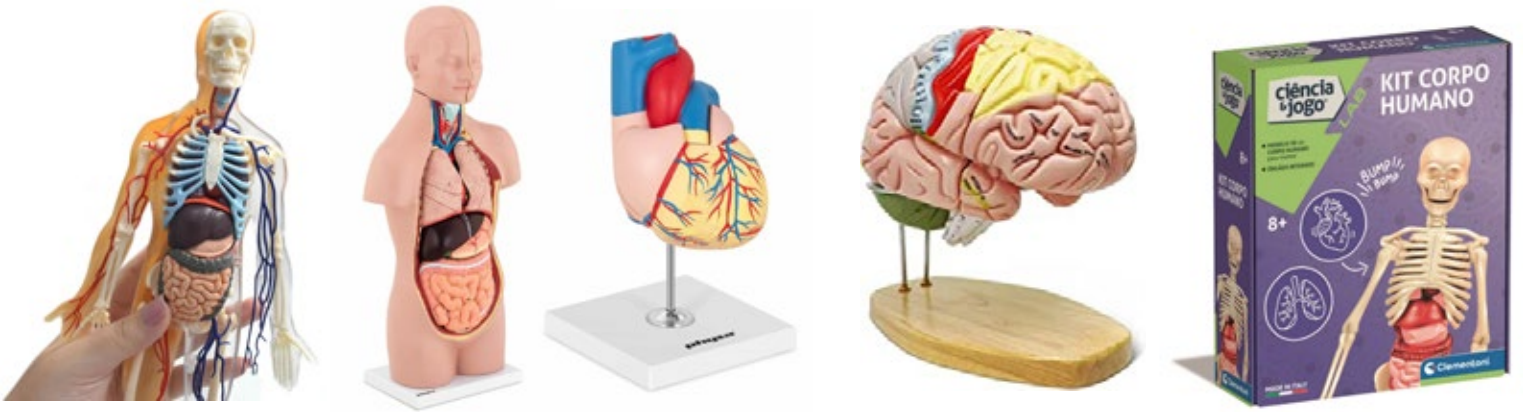
Besides didactic models, teachers can use didactic games, such as the game "Biodiversity – board game", where, through play, the student can acquire the intended learning. In addition, they can also use apps.

In addition to the educational resources previously mentioned, we can also highlight the following proposals according to the authors Brandes & Phillips, (2006):

INTRODUCTIONS GAME:

The aim of this game is to encourage the children to introduce themselves and to memorise their names.

> To do this, the teacher asks them to disperse in the classroom, where at the agreed signal they should shake hands with as many classmates as possible. As they shake hands, they should introduce themselves to each other. Each student should memorise as many names as possible.

GAME "THE MAN IN THE BOAT":

This game is intended to promote the development of student concentration.

> To do so, the class is asked to form a line in the centre of the room. When the teacher says "Crew, all to starboard", everyone should run to the right. On the other hand, when the teacher says "Crew, all hands to port", everyone moves to the left. Finally, when the teacher says "Crew, all hands to the boat", everyone should return to the initial position (row in the centre of the classroom). It is important to mention that during the game the teacher will mention the orders faster and faster, the last one to arrive is eliminated from the game.
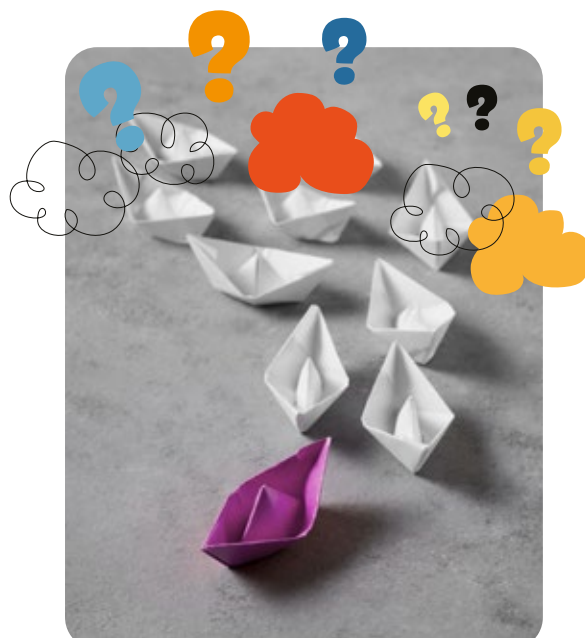
Mention also, some games to consider, not only in the classroom context, but also in the family environment. To be highlighted:

SUPER MIND:

> This is a proverb association game where, by associating pieces with fragments of proverbs, it promotes not only memory stimulation but also reasoning. It also stimulates attention and abstraction.

APPENDIX 1
"I HAVE A STUDENT WITH ADHD IN MY CLASSROOM. NOW WHAT?"

SURVIVAL GUIDE

As with other neurodevelopmental disorders, it may take some time before a diagnosis is reached. You have to **be patient and try to get to know the student's difficulties as well as possible**, together with the family.

DON'T EXPECT FOR THE DIAGNOSIS TO TELL YOU EVERYTHING!

- ADHD is not just hyperactivity, it also leads to problems with executive function, working memory and non--verbal operational memory; selective attention, sustained attention, etc.

- Even so, the medical report often contains guidelines that must be conducted and can be implemented.

AS A CLASS LEADER OR CLASS DIRECTOR, I MUST LOOK FOR RELIABLE INFORMATION ABOUT ADHD:

- I must know the symptoms of hyperactivity, impulsivity and attention deficit and I must seek specific knowledge and adequate training to better adapt the learning strategies.

- I can ask the Inclusive Education teacher for help.

- I must prepare a pamphlet (or look for support of this nature) and make it available at school.

- Training support should be requested from specialized associations.

AS A FULL PROFESSOR/CLASS DIRECTOR, IT IS IMPORTANT TO:

- Talk to the family to find out if the observed behaviors and difficulties are also experienced at home.

- Signal the child for an evaluation by the school psychologist.

- Implement the defined support measures for learning and inclusion.

WORK WITH THE CLASS FOR INCLUSION:

- Show a video and age-appropriate activities for the students in question to raise awareness of the topic.

- Students should be aware of the limitations and potential of this colleague

- Students should know what behaviors to avoid and what behaviors to promote.

WHAT TO AVOID IN A GENERAL WAY WITH A STUDENT WITH ADHD:

- ☒ Do not ask the student to write things down. Even if they do, they may forget to consult.

- ☒ Do not ask the student to prioritize or list tasks. Your brain prioritizes what is interesting to you or what it wants.

- ☒ The motto "If it has to be done, it should be done at the time" will be of no use - one of the characteristics of ADHD is procrastination or indefinitely postponing what must be done. These students know what must be done, they know when it must be done, they know why it must be done, but they cannot do it.

- ☒ Say phrases like:

  - 👎 "Stop being lazy."

  - 👎 "Pay attention!"

  - 👎 "You only remember what interests you!"

  - 👎 "You are cold, indifferent, you only care about yourself."

ATTENTION:

- **It's not a recipe**. ALL students with ADHD are different.

- We should **never try to change** the student. The school must conform to it.

- We must always **believe that they are capable, because they are**. However, they can only show it if we give them the possibility to do it through a different pedagogical path.

APPENDIX 2

Pamphlet to support class/school community information

IT IS IMPORTANT

to realize that not all people who have symptoms of hyperactivity or inattention have ADHD.

WHAT NOT TO DO

- Do not use punishment.
- Don't improvise or constantly change the rules.
- Do not individualize the problems and do not accuse.
- Don't look for guilt but rather look for solutions with the child.
- Saying "No" without thinking (excessive negative responses can be a stimulant for frustration and opposition).
- Do not underestimate the use of medications, as they can be a great help to control symptoms.

DID YOU KNOW THAT?

Justin Timberlake
Michael Jordan
Jim Carrey
Paris Hilton
Will Smith

have ADHD?
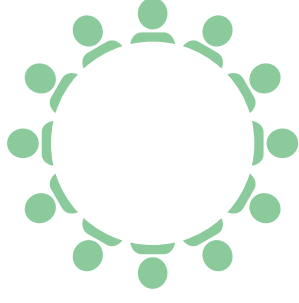
WE ARE ALL INVOLVED

All children matter and they really matter!

School is for each and every one.

UNESCO

inc4edu@gmail.com
https://edupa.pt/projeto-incedu/
facebook.com/Projeto Educação Inclusiva
incedu_inclusiveducation

+IncEdu
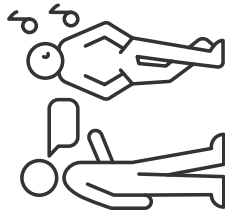
Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

ADHD

Hyperactivity **D**isorder and **A**ttention **D**eficit

Knowing to understand

Leaflet available to print (front and back).

WHAT IS IT?

is a disorder of brain development characterized by:
Three main symptoms:
1. Inattention
2. Hyperactivity and
3. Impulsivity.

The symptoms are maintained throughout life and already in adulthood manifests itself in the difficulty of day-to-day management, with impacts on personal and professional life.

ATTENTION DEFICIT

- Not paying attention to details.
- Difficulties in maintaining attention in the performance of tasks.
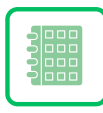- To seem that he does not hear when he is spoken to directly.
- Difficulty starting and finishing tasks.
- Difficulty organizing tasks or activities.
- Avoid tasks that involve sustained mental effort.

- Losing objects frequently.
- Easily distracted by other things.
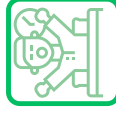- Often forgetting appointments.

HYPERACTIVITY / IMPULSIVITY

- Restlessly wiggle feet/hands/fidget in the chair.
- It gets up in situations where it is supposed to remain seated.
- Feeling restless.
- Difficulty in engaging with tranquility in leisure activities.
- Always walking fast or as if you were "connected to electricity".
- Talking too much.
- Answer before the questions end.
- Difficulty waiting for their turn.
- Interrupts or interferes with the activities of others.

CURIOSITIES

It is known that genetic factors are responsible for 70 to 80% of the risk of having ADHD. Parents and siblings of people with ADHD have five to ten times higher risk of developing ADHD than the rest of the population.

ADHD is more complex than people think.

Like icebergs, many problems that are related to ADHD are not seen.

ADHD can be mild, moderate or severe and probably coexists with other conditions and may be a disability for sufferers.

CHILDREN WITH ADHD ARE ...

- children who suffer and who feel misunderstood.
- unable to win without help.
- "different" and often connoted as ill-mannered, bad-natured, evil.
- often rejected by peers and sometimes by teachers and the environment.
- They are the children of parents who also end up being "victims" of the misunderstanding of the environment.

ADHD

Hyperactivity Disorder and Attention Deficit

Knowing to understand

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All children matter and they really matter!

School is for each and every one.

UNESCO

inc4edu@gmail.com

https://edupa.pt/projeto-incedu/

facebook.com/Projeto Educação Inclusiva

incedu_inclusiveducation

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Avoid tasks that involve sustained mental effort.

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- They are the children of parents who also end up being "victims" of the misunderstanding of the environment.

Losing objects frequently.

Easily distracted by other things.

Often forgetting appointments.

APPENDIX 3

Pamphlet to support class/school community information

source: Portuguese Society for Attention Deficit
www.spda.pt

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

RECOMMENDED READING

The Promotion of Parenting Competencies Programme "Together in the Challenge", arises from the need to present a structured intervention script for the Training of Parenting Skills. This manual of parental behavioural intervention is intended to be both a source of information and a therapeutic manual to be used by parents of children and adolescents diagnosed with ADHD Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Behavioural Disorders (e.g. Behavioural Disorder and Oppositional Defiance Disorder), or who simply reveal behavioural changes that constitute a difficulty for those who interact and relate to them.

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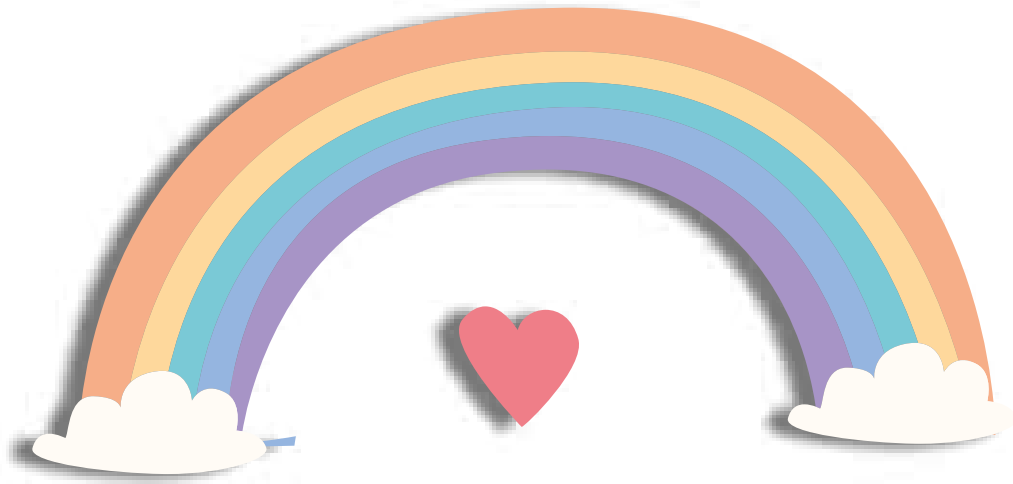
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"Thank you !!!!"

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