

EGYPT

Abuse in Kindergarten and Primary Schools

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1. Frame of Reference

Introduction

Abuse against children is spread worldwide and its results and bad effects affect all peoples, so it is of a great importance to consider it locally, regionally and internationally and we have to put an end to abuse with all its different shapes and types which in turn will lead to a good reflection upon the children's behaviour during their current and future lives then upon their families and societies.

So, the convention on the rights of the child has been ratified as it is one of the mostly accepted treaties all over the world and we have to make it in progress to achieve the good values and the 3 Ps. In accordance to THE CRC articles that are related to this topic No. 2,3,19,24,25,26,27,28,31 and 36.

On the local level in Egypt, there has been the ministerial decree No.591 in 17th. Nov.1998.about preventing abuse in schools.

We also have great efforts done in this respect in Egypt with the help of UNICEF e.g. (Psychological and Emotional Guide). On the regional level, there has been a research on abuse in schools with its different forms done by (UNRWA) United Nation Relief Works Agency.

CRC and the 3Ps.

- Provision (Food – Health – Educationetc.
- Protection (maltreatment – neglect – all forms of exploitation).
- Participation (Right to act – Right to be involved – Decision Making)

Now, the 3Ps will be addressed in our project, first we are implementing in a kindergarten school and two primary schools that is going on through different activities and practices to get to our desired outputs and outcomes.

Baseline

As an Egyptian Team, we have started our project in the light of CRC and the Ministerial decrees in progress to prevent abuse in Kindergarten and Primary schools.

2. Purpose

Our Purpose is to stop abuse in Kindergarten and Primary schools.

Reducing violent behavior in our target areas Kindergarten and Primary schools

Violence exists in schools, institutions and in the streets; children suffer from violence at home, within their families, and from other children. Violence does not often cause visible effects; however, it represents one of the most dangerous problems which affect children nowadays.

Those who inflict violence might not truly consider their aggressive acts as being violent, and they might even regard them as essential punishments. Moreover, the attacked child might feel shy or guilty, thinking that he deserved the violence, which leads the child most of the time to avoid speaking about the situation.

This can also affect the children's health, their studying ability or even their willingness to go to school; it might also lead them to escape from their homes, which makes them subject to more dangers. Moreover, violence destroys the child's self-confidence.

Although society is essentially a source of protection and a means of collaborating for the benefit of the child, it can also be a place of violence – including violence between class-mates or siblings – and it might be related to the scenes of violence, as in the mass media and the new technologies of information and communication.

Overall Goal:

Raise the kindergarten and primary school teachers' awareness of CRC and assure developing curricula in light of CRC.

Expected outcomes and outputs:

Spread the culture of CRC among not only kindergarten and primary school teachers but among all personnel and all stakeholders e.g. Politicians, NGOs, in addition to all concerned, bodies, institutions and organizations as well.

- Awareness of the CRC.
- Meeting the stakeholders.
- Setting & establishing the emotional education for the KG & Primary children.
- Training the teachers on the importance of school to children.

Teaching the Educators about the features of KG & Primary ages

- Applying and using different strategies to amend the undesired behaviour and acquiring new positive one.
- Educators will be able to watch children in classes and their behaviour.
- Training the teachers on the different strategies of classroom management.

Presenting the different elements or ways of good communication

- Reducing the abuse behaviour of KG & Primary school children.
- Children can participate and be involved in personalizing abuse and its shapes
- Supporting the good behaviour of children

The Stakeholders

- School Management.
- Board of Trustees.
- Parents.
- Psychological Specialist.
- Social Specialist.
- The Nurse of the school.

So related to what is to be different and changed is to get children who have a balanced and moderated behaviors and dealing with each other in a good manner, respecting each other, considering the other's points of views and are able to face the new society that is based on freedom and democracy which we are seeking in our societies.

3. Methodology & Activities

We have applied the project in three different schools. In a KG one and in two primary schools.

3 A. Methodology & Activities at the kindergarten School, Al-Mansoura Experimental Language Preschool

Special objectives for preschool, built on the common expected outcomes and outputs:

1. Spreading knowledge about the rights of children in the preschool phase;
2. Inculcating emotional development in the preschool child, and directing attention to this kind of development;
3. Satisfying the mental, physical and social needs of preschool children by creating activities which aim at meeting these needs;
4. Preparing activities which support the emotional aspects in children and which can be used by the teacher to execute in the daily program;
5. Providing teachers with skills to use strategies to change or eliminate any bad behavior of the children and replace it with positive behavior;
6. Appreciating the importance of individual differences among preschool children in their various forms;
7. Preparing activities to reduce any violent traits of preschool children.

First Stage: The condition of the preschool before applying the program of change

Through observation, the following were noticed:

1. The existence of problems resulting from violent conduct among the children;
2. The existence of problems among the teachers and the administration of the school/preschool;
3. The use of wrong educational methods by some preschool teachers in dealing with the children;
4. The lack of participation of the parents in the activities presented to the preschool children;
5. The absence of appropriate educational activities to amend the children's violent behavior.

Second Stage: Applying the program

1. A meeting was held with the general director and administration of the school to present the project of change: Reducing violent behavior in the preschool phase in the

light of The Convention on the Rights of the Child. Accordingly, a work shop was held for the preschool teachers about the method of carrying out the guidelines of The Convention on the Rights of the Child.

I discussed the importance of preschool for children. Moreover, the discussion considered what the phrase ‘a preschool that children love’ meant.

2. A questionnaire was prepared to measure the intellectual requirements needed to reduce violent behavior in the preschool stage on the part of the preschool teachers. It comprised three fields:

- The teacher’s knowledge about the rights of the child;
- The teacher’s knowledge of the specific attributes of the phase;
- Knowledge of violent behavior, its motives and its influence upon the child.

Sample from the questionnaire:

My dear teacher, you have much experience in dealing with children; what do you think, considering one point at a time, should be available in a school that children love?

The terms related to the physical environment: the appearance of the preschool and its buildings – the furniture – the cleanliness of environment – the availability of a suitable place for children – the number of children in a class, etc.

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The terms related to the preschool: what are the elements that should be available in the preschool which would lead to a system that the child prefers, and so make him love his preschool?

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The terms related to the relationship between the teacher and the children: what should the teacher consider while dealing with the children as a whole to create an environment which would help the children love their preschool?

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The terms related to the relationship among children in the preschool: what is the expected relationship that upholds the slogan of a preschool that children love?

The results were as follows:

- There was an absence of dialogue or effective communication with the children;
- There was a lack purposeful activities that aimed at utilizing the excessive energy of the children;
- There was a lack of effective communication with the family and the local society;
- Some incorrect methods were applied on the part of the parents or teachers.

3. A workshop was held on the importance of emotional education during this stage to handle points of weaknesses in teachers. It aims at developing feelings in a way that would lead to establishing positive relationships with others and with life in general.

Sample from the workshop:

Dear teacher, please tick the box which represents the way you use each of the methods stated in the following table:

| | Method | I never apply it (1) | I rarely apply it (2) | I apply it sometimes (3) | I always apply it (4) |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | Total control | | | | |
| 2 | Overprotection | | | | |
| 3 | Negligence | | | | |
| 4 | Spoiling | | | | |
| 5 | Blaming | | | | |
| 6 | Strictness | | | | |
| 7 | Inconsistency | | | | |
| 8 | Discrimination | | | | |

After having estimated yourself, propose some suggestions promoting the attitude the teacher should have when bringing up children, and try to answer this question: what should the teachers who got grade (4), which means that they use one or more of the previous methods in dealing with children, do? Help yourself and others by adding some suggestions according to the following table:

| | Method | Suggestions |
|---|----------------------|-------------|
| 1 | <i>Total control</i> | |
| 2 | Overprotection | |
| 3 | Negligence | |
| 4 | Spoiling | |
| 5 | Blaming | |
| 6 | Strictness | |
| 7 | Inconsistency | |
| 8 | Discrimination | |

4. A meeting was held with the parents, the administration of the preschool and the teachers to explain the usual attributes of development in the preschool stage, while taking individual differences into account, with the aim of establishing a good relationship with the children in order for the children's emotional development to be sound.

Emotional education is directly associated with understanding the age specific attributes of the child, since understanding the age specific attributes help us to play an appropriate educational role. The way the emotional side of our children is developed,

by considering different age specific attributes, was also discussed. Considering the age specific attributes and associating them with our educational role in the preschool (regarding the relationship between the teacher and the child, and regarding the choice of appropriate and effective educational methods for children of this age) will help to achieve effective emotional education and also reduce violence.

Sample of questionnaire:

Dear teacher, the following table will help you to discover your educational role by giving you a deep understanding of the age specific attributes of the children: Provide a summary for each group of attributes, using clearly defined points;

- Provide your suggestions for the educational role that would support the development of these age specific attributes, using clearly defined points.

| | Attributes | Summary of attributes | Suggested educational role |
|---|--|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | Physical development | | |
| 2 | Emotional development | | |
| 3 | Social development | | |
| 4 | Language development | | |
| 5 | Knowledge and intellectual development | | |

5. A workshop was held with teachers and parents to determine the causes of violent conduct and present novel strategies and activities related to the syllabus studied in the preschool in the fields of: physical education – performance techniques – scientific concepts – religious and social concepts, to reduce violent behavior.

The behavior of children was observed, the undesired behavior was determined and its causes were identified after communicating with parents and the psychologist at school; the undesired behavior was reformed by providing suitable activities to help reduce it.

| | Undesired behavior | Its causes according to your viewpoint | Educational suggestions for reforming it |
|---|--------------------|--|--|
| 1 | | | |
| 2 | | | |
| 3 | | | |
| 4 | | | |
| 5 | | | |

Some activities which meet the essential needs of children were actually carried out; they included the following:

- Enhancing the child’s feeling that he is important;
- Enhancing the child’s self-confidence;
- Supporting the child’s needs for curiosity, knowledge and love of play;
- Being just towards children according to their abilities;

6. Seminars were held with teachers about the way the preschool classrooms should be managed to reduce violence. Some points were accordingly identified for the purpose of the teacher's success in managing the educational situation so as to reduce the application of violence towards the children in the classrooms; they included the following:

- Determining the aims that the child should achieve daily in a form that can be evaluated;
- Preparing the activities classroom (the seating arrangements, audio-visual methods, advertisement board, etc.);
- Keeping discipline and good conduct inside the classroom by determining work rules, encouraging the children's participation in enforcing them, providing incentives, classifying children into work groups and assigning each group a specific responsibility, such as cleaning committees – discipline committees – the protection of tools – the upkeep of plants, etc.
- Being aware of the importance of positive time management inside the activity classrooms;
- Classifying children into groups and changing their roles in the groups during the activities.

7. Workshops were held to activate good communication among the preschool teachers, children and parents, by allowing parents to participate in some activities in the preschool which would lead to the reduction of any violent conduct of the children.

8. Preschool children were encouraged to participate in creative activities through the cooperation between the preschool and the exploratory center for sciences, in addition to frequent workshops being held for children who suffer from violent behavior towards their class-mates, in order to direct their thoughts in a positive way and for the child to exploit their excessive energy and latent abilities in making creative artworks etc.. Follow up was maintained on the part of the parents and the supervision of the class teachers.

9. Procedures were designed to observe the child's behavior in the preschool, analyze the results with the preschool psychologist and, in turn, formulate a program to improve the child's behavior.

10. A magazine was designed by the preschool teachers, the psychologist and the school doctor to spread awareness of the rights of children and reduce any violent behavior in the preschool.

3 B. Methodology & Activities at the first primary school, Atef Sadat Primary

Firstly: current situation found:

1. Existence of problems among students
2. Existence of problems between teachers and students
3. Existence of problems between teachers and school Administration
4. Lack of activities
5. Existence of aggressive behavior

Secondly: efforts dedicated for change:

1. Good observation for children's behavior as well as teachers' and what the school administration do to face violence.
2. Getting all of the involved aware of the ministerial decree relating to preventing violence against children at schools.
3. Holding symposiums and seminars for teachers to get them aware of the importance of good communication with all stakeholders at all levels.
4. Spread the culture of CRC and the importance of activating the agreement of preventing abuse.
5. Encourage and increase activities at schools especially those which limit the aggressive behaviors among children.
6. Encourage children to take part at all activities and awarding them.

3 C. Methodology & Activities In the Second primary school Misr Al-Hurra Integrated Distinct Experimental Language School

I have gone to school after having the MOE Security agreement, launched and spread the culture of the project, then prepared for a meeting with The Board of trustees and parents , I also had a meeting with the school staff and spread the culture of CRC and presented my project as well as the working plan with both the school staff and the board of trustees then began to get the solutions from parents and teachers.

We had a meeting with both the social and psycho specialists in the school and discussed the best ways of decreasing the abuse inside school. During the following visit to school I began taking down notes about the different behaviours of both the teachers and the learners inside the school and the way the teachers are treating the children inside and outside the classroom.

We trained the teachers on the different methods and activities, some of the CRC articles, the 3Ps and how they could achieve them.

We also asked the teachers to do the Norms sheet or agreement sheet and hang it inside the class as well as the features of the average age of the children in the primary stage.

We did a workshop with the teachers to design some activities to support the inner psychological sides and discussing them.

We discussed the different ways of discovering the individual differences and how they can support those who have special needs e.g. both the slow learners and the talented learners i.e. getting special programs for them.

A workshop on the best ways of direct communication between learners and teachers to remove the psychological hinders and fears between them.

We also trained the teachers on the best ways of the classroom management.

We trained the teachers on the best strategies to manage the class and how to save and provide the learners I mean activate the first P (provision) with the best circumstances that is suitable for Learning environment.

A workshop on how to apply these strategies inside classes , making class visits to see what have been changed then asked to have a meeting with parents to see the changes in their children`s behaviours.

4. Results

The Indicators we began to see are as follows:

4 A. Results at the Kindergarten Al-Mansoura Experimental Language Preschool

Third Stage: The achievements

The activities carried out by of the preschool teachers and parents in implementing the project of change: Reducing the violent behavior of the child in the preschool phase:

- The children's desire to participate in the exploratory center for sciences was increased;
- Treatment programs by the preschool teachers and psychologist were presented;
- Continuous cooperation among the preschool administration, teacher and parents was established to provide the child's needs to reduce his violent behavior;
- Cooperation with centers and social services to reduce violence was encouraged;
- The negative attitude of the violent child was successfully changed into a positive one.

Procedures need to be carried out

Training programs should be prepared to encourage the edification of the child and reduce a child's violent behavior in the nurseries. These should be implemented in the majority of the pre-school establishments, under the supervision of the relative authorities.

- 1 – There are particular problems with abuse behavior among children.
- 2 – There are problems between teachers and the school administration / kindergarten.
- 3 – Kindergarten teachers follow some false teaching methods when dealing with children.
- 4 – Lack of participation of parents in the activities provided for children kindergarten.
- 5 – Lack of appropriate educational activities to modify abuse behavior in children.

Second, the steps that were followed for change.

- Holding a meeting with the administration of the kindergarten to display the objectives of the project and to take approval for the implementation of kindergarten as follows: 3 rooms for the first level – 5 rooms for the second level.
- Holding a meeting with the kindergarten teachers and parents to spread awareness of the culture of child rights and activate the agreement items to resist violence.
- Designing a questionnaire to measure the “knowledge requirements to reduce abuse behavior in kindergarten stage for the kindergarten teachers” and evaluate it by professors of psychology, Faculty of Education, Mansoura University.
- Holding workshops with kindergarten teachers about the importance of emotional education for the children of the kindergarten to reduce abuse behavior and to identify wrong educational trends and their impact on the child when dealing with him at this stage.
- Holding a meeting with parents, administration and kindergarten teachers to view the properties of the growth in kindergarten in order to establish a good relationship with the children for the emotional growth but with taking into account the individual differences.
- Holding Workshops with both teachers and parents to determine the causes of abuse behavior and provide strategies and innovative activities linked to children kindergarten curriculum in the fields of(Physical Education Performing Arts – scientific concepts – of social and religious concepts) in order to reduce abuse behavior.
- Holding a seminar for of kindergarten teachers to how to manage the hall in the kindergarten to reduce aggressive behavior.
- To hold Workshops to activate good communication between kindergarten teachers, children and parents.
- To encourage children in the kindergarten to participate with creative activities through cooperation with the kindergarten and exploratory Center for Science in Dakahliya.

- Designing a magazine by kindergarten teachers, psychologist and doctor of the school to spread awareness of children's rights and reduce abuse behavior in the kindergarten.

4 B. Results at the first primary school, Atef Sadat Primary,

INDICATORS: What has been achieved in the short term: Teachers and students respond to what is being done.

What is expected in the medium term: Children are encouraged to participate effectively and cooperate with teachers and school and school principal.

Expected results have been achieved: aggressive behaviors reduced among children. Teachers' positive response to the use of motivations. Encouraging and supporting children instead of punishing them.

Barriers:

Some teachers insist that physical punishment is the means to learning
Regulations, laws and routine that delay taking decisions

4 C. Results at the second primary school, Misr Al-Hurra Integrated Distinct Experimental Language School

In the second primary school that is called (Misr Al-Hurra Integrated Distinct Experimental Language School) I began to notice a big change in the learners behaviors and all has become aware of the CRC and the teachers have become also aware of the importance of school to children and the importance of emotional education in this phase.

Teachers now are applying and using different strategies to amend the undesired behaviors of children and trying to save the conditions that must be available to classroom management.

What has been achieved in the short-term is that to reduce the abuse behaviours of KG and primary school children.

The second P (protection) will be reactivated via implementing good communication among the teachers themselves and together with the learners.

Holding and making the school activities that lead to abuse – relief.

Children also can participate and be involved in personalizing abuse and its shapes i.e. activating the third P (participation) and they will be able to distinguish between the good and the bad behaviors.

What will be achieved in the medium-term is giving the children the steering-wheel of leadership that make the children involved in decision making as well as reducing the abuse among them.

They also will be able to precise activities that lead them to abuse – reduction

Children will be able to support the good behaviours of the other children.

The expected results are having some of the generation aware of their rights as well as the CRC and they make groups to fight and resist abuse and to participate in the process of abuse – reduction and to be also enrolled in decision – making inside classes and school.

The unexpected results are the change resistance by the children that are the most violent in the school and by those whose families are dispersed or one person leading family or whose parents are separated.

5. Discussion and Reflection

These results are considered as normal average ones because our society in Egypt is experiencing now so many changes in all aspects in our life due to the political and economic changes that are happening now so we hope it will be more fruitful later on after having both political and economic changes being settled, so we can say that these results are somehow on the right track.

There are so many challenges we may face due to current circumstances and the large use of mass media with its different attitudes and cultures towards the upbringing of the children as well as the lack of CRC culture at parents and families and the schools are not the only affecting factors in our children.

6. Way Forward

In the first primary school we plan and intend to reduce abuse against children in the primary stage and kindergarten stage.

In the second primary school we plan and intend to go on the project trying to overcome some children`s fears and their resistance to the amendment process of their behaviors.

We all the Egyptian team are doing our best to have the desired results after finishing our project and hope we will have the fruitful and endless cooperation.

We have now in the school (Atef El Sadat primary school & Misr Al-Hurra) Councils to Resist Violence component of a group of students who have good behavior and have the desire to help their colleagues. We have trained these students on how to help their colleagues and provide solutions to the problems they could face. We also have a team of police consists of school students who have excessive energy and this energy cause in both behavior and we direct this energy and training these students on how to renounce violence and even educate their colleagues the importance of modifying their aggressive behavior.

We think that sustainability is more important than what has been done in these three schools to insure the continuous process of both reducing violence and modify the behaviors to the best for the sake of all in terms of CRC.