

# Parents' role in the development of social abilities as an alliance between school and family

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## **Summary**

This article describes a pattern of intervention for families and schools about the development of social abilities and in their possibilities of generalization.

This project involves 10 groups for a total number of 150 children.

## **Description**

-Students with disabilities and students who are at risk of school-failure can have a deficit in social abilities.

-Social abilities come from learning, they are not natural tendencies. They are learnt by educational experiences lived by persons.

-according to Bowlby "Affection/attachment theory", parents' relationship remains as a Inner Operative Pattern of relationship and works as a "GUIDE" orienting the ways we address to the others.

-the parents' relationship style is influential in terms of pattern and communication.

-parents' style is influenced by their relationship pattern and by their perception of children.

According to these statements we can see that an intervention on social abilities involving parents influences not only the "skills" of children, but also the "skills" of parents.

## **Training**

Training consists in a joint work between parent and child and it is divided into two separated stages:

-The first stage consists in an activity developed at school when parent and child work together.

-A second stage is developed at home by doing some homework with the aim of investigating thoroughly and generalizing.

### **Stage 1**

A joint work allows parents to catch thoughts and emotions of their children, so that they can connect them with their parent style and they can give a contribution to the emotional decoding. Furthermore they help to find the right attitudes for children.

In stage 1 there are four steps:

*-Step 1 The perception of oneself*

Being socially adapted means to have the ability to perceive oneself as adapted to the situation. The perception of one's position in a situation allows to understand emotions, thoughts and dysfunctional behaviour.

*-Step 2 The role of emotions*

The concept of oneself determines the meaning given to a certain situation and direct the actions.

*-Step 3 The role of thoughts*

Catching the interior dialogue of children allows to focus on dysfunctional thoughts which sustain disability attitudes.

*-Step 4 The competent answer*

The aim of this step is to build a competent answer by using relational problem solving strategies.

Stage 2

*Homeworks*

Homeworks are useful for parents because they contribute to the generalization of children in a positive way. This is because they allow parents to sustain the social abilities of children on the long-term. They are also useful because they allow parents to teach social abilities to their children and to sustain a cooperation between school and families.

Methodology

- stories and metaphors;
- role-plays
- modeling

**Conclusions**

- Emotional disease cases are often found in schools.
- Children/young people with difficulties often suffer from deficits in their social abilities.
- A number of interventions on social abilities come out to be efficient in the short period and are difficult to generalize.
- In order to foster this generalization, parents should be involved in the construction of social abilities:
  1. because parents can support right attitudes in a longer period of time;
  2. because parent's style can be influenced by involving parents.