



KHETAUN (TOGETHER): With Key Steps to Inclusion of Romani Children into Quality Early Childhood Programs

Steps to Becoming an Inclusive Learning-Friendly Environment

Description of tool:

This tool suggests steps that school/kindergarden staff (or a dedicated team) might take to create a more “inclusive, learning-friendly environment”

Introduction

- **ALL** children have the right to learn, as set forth in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) which virtually all governments in the world have signed.
- **All** children **can** learn, without regard to their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic, ethnical or other conditions.
- **All children are different**

What is “Inclusive”?

- Is about “including” anyone regardless of his/her specificities;
- Is creating the premises for every single individual to use his/her capabilities at their maxim potential;
- Even when all children are *enrolled in school*, some may still be excluded from *participating and learning in the classroom*.
- For instance, they may be children:
 - for whom a lesson or textbook is not written in their first language;
 - who are never asked to contribute;
 - who never offer to contribute;
 - who can’t see the blackboard or a textbook or can’t hear the teacher; or
 - who are not learning well and for whom no attempt is made to help them.

Is the teacher responsibility for creating a learning environment where ALL children can learn, ALL children want to learn, and ALL children feel included in our classrooms and schools.

What is “Learning-Friendly”?

- A “learning-friendly” environment is “child-friendly” **and** “teacher-friendly.”
- It stresses the importance of pupils and teachers learning together as a learning community.
- It places children at the centre of learning and encourages their active participation in learning.
- It also fulfils the needs and interests of teachers, so that teachers want to, and are capable of, giving children the best education possible.

Creating an inclusive, learning-friendly school environment is a process—a journey!

Making an Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environment - *ILFE*

Step 1: Set Up an ILFE Team

Step 2: Identify Needs

- A. What do people already know and what do they need to learn?
- B. Learn about the school and the community's children.
- C. Analyse this information.
- D. Collect further information.

Step 3: Create a Vision

- A. Describe your desired classroom environment, or even your "Dream (Ideal) Classroom."

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B. Next, describe your desired education programme and school environment.

Step 4: Produce an ILFE School Development Plan

A. Develop a schedule of activities for creating and implementing your ILFE.

B. Provide for additional resources as needed.

C. Consider minds and hearts.

- **Step 5: Implement Your Plan**
 - A. Provide technical assistance for staff as needed.
 - B. Train school staff (teaching and non-teaching) and students as needed.
 - C. Promote active parental involvement.
 - D. Plan how you will deal with resistance.

Step 6: Evaluate Your Plan and Celebrate Your Success

A. Monitor progress and modify your plan as needed.

B. Celebrate Your Successes!

Monitoring Your Progress

- What differences are we making?
- Are our classrooms and schools becoming more inclusive and learning-friendly?

To find out whether you are successfully developing an Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environment, you will want to ask two key questions:

- 1. Are we “inclusive and learning-friendly” in the ways we set out to be? (How can we improve on what we have done?)
- 2. What difference have we made, especially in improving children’s learning?

You can evaluate the process (#1) and the outcomes (#2) of an ILFE both informally and formally.

And remember—children are also good monitors and evaluators, so ask them too!

Here are five ways to gather information in order to find out whether the school is moving towards becoming an ILFE.

- 1. Keep diaries and records.**
- 2. Talk to other people.**
- 3. Assess knowledge and skills through essays.**
- 4. Observation.**
- 5. Documents.**