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**INNOVATIVE SUPPORT AND EDUCATION FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN
WITH DISABILITIES THROUGH INFORMAL ADVISING**



**COLLECTION OF BEST PRACTICES FROM TÜRKİYE-POLAND-SLOVAKIA
June 2025**



**KIRIKKALE
ÜNİVERSİTESİ**



SPOLUPRÁCOU PRE LEPŠIU BUDÚCNOSŤ
VELKÝ MEDER
TEAMWORK FOR A BETTER FUTURE



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B.POLAND EXAMPLE 2

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- 1.4. Substantive Patronage

2. Target Groups

- 2.1. Individuals with Depression
- 2.2. Families and Caregivers
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3.Main Objectives

- 3.1. Raising Awareness
- 3.2. Reducing Stigma
- 3.3. Promoting Help-Seeking Behavior

4.Campaign Components

- 4.1. Website (www.forumprzeciwdepresji.pl)
- 4.2. Facebook Page (www.facebook.com/ForumPrzeciwDepresji)
- 4.3. Beck Depression Test
- 4.4. News & Articles
- 4.5. Competitions and Art Activities
- 4.6. Library and Guides

5.Thematic Areas Covered

- 5.1. About Depression
- 5.2. Anyone Can Have Depression
- 5.3. I Am Ill with Depression
- 5.4. My Loved One Has Depression
- 5.5. Where to Look for Help
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6.Teenage Depression Focus

- 6.1. Symptoms in Adolescents
- 6.2. Parent Zone
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7.News Section (Examples)

- 7.1. *May 29, 2025* – Does Depression Have a “Holiday”?
- 7.2. *April 30, 2025* – Loneliness: A New Mental Health Epidemic
- 7.3. *March 31, 2025* – How to Reduce Microstress at Work?

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- 8.1. Depression Stop
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- 9.2. Educational Campaigns
- 9.3. Mindful Parent Academy
- 9.4. Media and Journalist Participation

10.Keywords and Related Topics

- 10.1. Physical Activity, Anhedonia, Anxiety
- 10.2. Diet, Diabetes, Heart Disease
- 10.3. Children, Teenagers, Teachers
- 10.4. Psychotherapy, Psychiatrists, Support Groups

C.POLAND EXAMPLE 3

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D.SLOVAKIA EXAMPLE 1

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Overview of Autism Spectrum Disorders
- 1.2 Goals of Raising a Child with ASD
- 1.3 About the Association for Helping People with Autism (SPOSA)

2. Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorders

- 2.1 Characteristics and Unique Needs of Children with ASD
- 2.2 Common Challenges in Parenting Children with ASD

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- 3.3 Establishing a Clear Daily Schedule
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- 3.6 Learning Through Real-Life Experiences

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- 4.1 Independence Training (Hygiene, Eating, Dressing, Personal Care)
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11. Additional Resources and Contact Information

- 11.1 Useful Links and References
- 11.2 Contact Details for SPOSA

E.SLOVAKIA EXAMPLE 2

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Overview of the Training Programme
- 1.2 Importance of Sign Language for Children with Special Needs

2. Description of the Education/Training

- 2.1 Course Structure and Duration
- 2.2 Distribution and Use of Picture and Text Cards

3. Pedagogical Objectives

- 3.1 Supporting Communication Development
- 3.2 Providing Tools for Effective Communication
- 3.3 Reducing Frustration and Misunderstandings
- 3.4 Strengthening Parent-Child Relationships

4. Target Groups

- 4.1 Parents, Teachers, and Caregivers
- 4.2 Specific Conditions Addressed (Down syndrome, speech and hearing impairments, autism, ASD)

5. Programme Duration and Format

- 5.1 Three-Month Online Course
- 5.2 Regular Online Meetings and Consultations

6. Modules and Content

- 6.1 Introduction to Sign Language
- 6.2 Working with Picture and Text Cards
- 6.3 Development of Communication Skills
- 6.4 Managing Problematic Situations

7. Methods Used

- 7.1 Interactive Online Teaching
- 7.2 Practical Exercises with Cards
- 7.3 Group Discussions and Experience Sharing
- 7.4 Individual Consultations and Counselling

8. Tools Used

- 8.1 Set of Illustrated Picture and Text Cards (120 signs, 150 words)
- 8.2 Online Learning Platform

9. Results and Practical Experiences

- 9.1 Improvements in Communication
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- 2.2 Role and Training of Peer Counsellors

3. Pedagogical Objectives

- 3.1 Emotional Support for Parents
- 3.2 Practical Advice on Caring for Children with Disabilities
- 3.3 Sharing Experiences and Best Practices
- 3.4 Empowering Parents and Navigating Services and Rights

4. Target Groups

- 4.1 Parents of Children with Disabilities Seeking Support

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- 5.2 Individual and Small Group Counselling Options

6. Modules and Content

- 6.1 Individual Counselling: Personalized Family Consultations
- 6.2 Group Meetings: Discussions and Experience Sharing
- 6.3 Thematic Workshops on Specific Topics

7. Methods Used

- 7.1 Peer-to-Peer Counselling
- 7.2 Sharing Individual Experiences
- 7.3 Expert Consultations and Workshops

8. Tools Used

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- 8.2 Educational Materials and Guides

9. Educational Materials (Examples)

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- 9.3 “Hygiene” Routine: Fostering Independence in Daily Care
- 9.4 “Dressing” Routine: Encouraging Self-Sufficiency
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- 1.2 Target Audience and Scope
- 1.3 Importance of Early Childhood Support for Children with Disabilities

2. Program Definition and Structure

- 2.1 Overview of the Online Parent Home Support Program
- 2.2 Description of the Digital Materials and Resources
- 2.3 Disability Groups Covered (11 different groups)
- 2.4 Navigating the Platform: Search Functions and Disability Group Access

3. Program Content

- 3.1 Written Materials: Brochures, Posters, Information Notes
- 3.2 Visual Materials: Drawings, Videos, Expert Presentations
- 3.3 Scientific Basis and Parent-Friendly Language

4. Benefits and Expected Outcomes

- 4.1 Meeting Information Needs of Parents
- 4.2 Developing Children's Skills Related to Delays/Disabilities
- 4.3 Supporting Parents' Psycho-social Well-being
- 4.4 Free Access and Comprehensive Digital Resource

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- 15.2 Contact Information for Support

LSAMDER EXAMPLE 1

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Overview of TOHUM Autism Foundation Family Programs
- 1.2 Purpose and Importance of Family Education and Support for Children with Autism

2. Program Objectives

- 2.1 Increasing Families' Knowledge and Skills
- 2.2 Assisting Parents with Teaching and Behavior Management at Home
- 2.3 Promoting Social Support and Solidarity Among Families
- 2.4 Raising Awareness of Social Services, Rights, and Resources

3. Target Group

- 3.1 Parents and Primary Caregivers of Children Diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- 3.2 Role of Family Members and Close Supporters in Child Development

4. Program Activities

- 4.1 Workshops (Face-to-Face and Online)
- 4.2 Online Seminars
- 4.3 Individual Guidance and Counseling
- 4.4 Support Group Meetings
- 4.5 Practical Examples, Case Studies, and Role-Playing

5. Educational Content and Delivery

- 5.1 Modular Educational Content via Online Training Portal
- 5.2 Sequential or Needs-Based Module Selection
- 5.3 Topics Covered: Autism Characteristics, Behavior Management, Skill Development, Social Preparation

6. Expected Outcomes and Benefits

- 6.1 Enhanced Family Knowledge on Autism and Educational Strategies
- 6.2 Improved Home-Based Teaching and Behavior Management Skills
- 6.3 Strengthened Social Support Networks and Reduced Isolation
- 6.4 Long-Term Progress in Children's Communication, Self-Care, and Social Skills

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J.SAMDER EXAMPLE 2

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Overview of SOBE Foundation
- 1.2 Mission, Vision, and Core Principles
- 1.3 Role in Autism Education and Social Integration in Turkey

2. Program Objectives

- 2.1 Enabling Independence and Social Participation for Individuals with Autism
- 2.2 Providing Comprehensive Support to Families and Professionals
- 2.3 Promoting Social Awareness and Inclusion

3. Target Group

- 3.1 Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- 3.2 Families and Caregivers of Individuals with Autism
- 3.3 Professionals Working in Autism Education and Rehabilitation

4. Family Support and Education Services

4.1 Individual Counseling

4.1.1 One-on-One Guidance Tailored to Family and Child Needs

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4.2.1 Topics: Autism, Behavior Management, Communication, Home Teaching, Daily Living Skills

4.2.2 Formats: Face-to-Face and Online Sessions

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5. Specialized Programs for Home Support

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6. Collaboration and Partnerships

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7.2 Enhanced Child Development through Family Engagement

7.3 Increased Social Awareness and Inclusion of Individuals with Autism

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8.1 Registration and Participation Information

8.2 Contact Details and Support Channels

9. References and Resources

9.1 Links to Additional Materials and Support Networks

9.2 Scientific and Practical Educational Tools

K.SAMDER EXAMPLE 3

1. Introduction

1.1 Overview of Turkey Down Syndrome Association

1.2 Mission, Vision, and Core Values

1.3 Historical Background and Organizational Development

1.4 National and International Collaborations and Partnerships

2. Program Objectives

2.1 Improving Quality of Life for Individuals with Down Syndrome

2.2 Supporting Families in Educational and Social Processes

2.3 Combating Discrimination and Promoting Equal Opportunities

2.4 Enhancing Social Inclusion and Public Awareness

3. Target Group

3.1 Individuals with Down Syndrome and Their Families

3.2 Professionals Working with Individuals with Down Syndrome

3.3 General Public Interested in Down Syndrome Awareness

4. Family Support and Education Programs Overview

4.1 Early Intervention and Continuous Development Focus

4.2 Establishment of Regional Branches and Networks

4.3 Building Solidarity Among Families

5. Family +1 Program

5.1 Description and Purpose

5.2 Content Coverage: Physiotherapy, Special Education, Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Nutrition, Legal Rights, Social Services, etc.

5.3 Format: 90-minute Online Webinars, 12 Sessions Annually

5.4 Participation and Registration Details

6. Qualified Parents Program

6.1 Objective: Strengthening Parents' Roles in Developmental Support

6.2 Structure: Modular Training Sessions with Expert Guidance and Experience Sharing

6.3 Key Topics: Early Intervention, Home Teaching Techniques, Behavior Management, Social Participation

6.4 Format: Hybrid (Face-to-Face Workshops + Online Support Sessions)

7. Program Outcomes and Impact

7.1 Increased Knowledge and Skills of Families

7.2 Enhanced Family Participation in Educational Processes

7.3 Empowerment in Advocacy and Fighting Discrimination

7.4 Social Awareness and Inclusive Attitudes

8. Strengths and Unique Features

8.1 Scientific and Practice-Oriented Modular Content

8.2 Hybrid Delivery Model for Nationwide Accessibility

8.3 Emphasis on Active Family Participation and Solidarity

8.4 Continuous Program Updates through Collaboration

9. Access and Participation

9.1 How to Join Programs

9.2 Contact Information and Support Channels

10. References and Resources

10.1 Additional Educational Materials and Support Networks

10.2 National and International Down Syndrome Resources

L.DEGDER EXAMPLE 1

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Overview of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- 1.2 Founding History and Mission of TODEV
- 1.3 Purpose and Scope of the Guidance Website

2. Objectives of the Program

- 2.1 Supporting Families in Raising Children with ASD
- 2.2 Enhancing Educational, Social, and Emotional Development
- 2.3 Promoting Early Intervention and Family Involvement

3. Target Audience

- 3.1 Parents and Primary Caregivers of Children Diagnosed with ASD
- 3.2 Families Seeking Information, Support, and Educational Guidance

4. Methodological Recommendations

- 4.1 Developing Educational Programs for Academic Success
- 4.2 Supporting Social and Emotional Development
- 4.3 Organizing Art and Sports Activities
- 4.4 Providing Parental Education and Counseling
- 4.5 Teaching Technology and Digital Literacy

5. Development Areas of Children with Autism

- 5.1 Cognitive and Academic Development
- 5.2 Social Interaction and Communication Skills

6. Supporting Communication Skills

- 6.1 Individual and Group Therapies
- 6.2 Play-Based Educational Methods
- 6.3 Language Development Strategies

7. Steps for Working with a Child with Autism

- 7.1 Comprehensive Assessment and Diagnosis
- 7.2 Creating an Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
- 7.3 Structuring the Learning Environment
- 7.4 Implementation of Education and Therapy Sessions
- 7.5 Parental Training and Home Collaboration
- 7.6 Continuous Monitoring, Evaluation, and Progress Reporting

8. Strengths of the Program

- 8.1 Scientifically Based and Individualized Approaches
- 8.2 Active Parental Participation
- 8.3 Multi-Disciplinary Expert Teams
- 8.4 Online and On-Site Support Integration

9. Access and Participation

- 9.1 How to Use the Website
- 9.2 Access to Tools, Materials, and Support Services
- 9.3 Contact and Referral Information

10. References and Resources

- 10.1 Further Reading and Educational Tools
- 10.2 National Autism Support Networks and Services
- 10.3 Useful Links and Expert Contributions

M.DEGDER EXAMPLE 2

1. Introduction

- 1.1 About Engelsiz Yaşam Foundation
- 1.2 Background and Purpose of the Program
- 1.3 Target Population and Accessibility Approach

2. Objectives of the Program

- 2.1 Enhancing Personal and Social Development
- 2.2 Supporting Artistic and Daily Living Skills
- 2.3 Promoting Social Inclusion and Confidence

3. Program Structure and Duration

- 3.1 Annual Continuity and Session Frequency
- 3.2 Session Duration and Scheduling
- 3.3 Flexibility Based on Participant Needs

4. Pedagogical Goals

- 4.1 Social Interaction and Communication Development
- 4.2 Artistic Expression and Creative Skills
- 4.3 Psychomotor and Self-Care Skills
- 4.4 Group Functionality and Self-Confidence

5. Target Groups

- 5.1 Children, Youth, and Adults with Disabilities
- 5.2 Families and Caregivers
- 5.3 Educators, Volunteers, and Support Professionals

6. Group Size and Format

- 6.1 Ideal Group Sizes for Workshops
- 6.2 Individual vs. Group Sessions
- 6.3 Flexible Organization Based on Participant Profiles

7. Modules and Content

7.1 Art Workshops

- 7.1.1 Painting, Ceramics, Marbling (Ebru), Music
- 7.1.2 Supporting Fine Motor Skills and Emotional Expression

7.2 Life Skills Training

- 7.2.1 Self-Care, Shopping, Time Management
- 7.2.2 Independent Living Practices

7.3 Social Interaction Module

- 7.3.1 Games, Drama, Cooperative Activities
- 7.3.2 Communication and Social Harmony Development

7.4 Family Involvement Program

- 7.4.1 Active Family Participation
- 7.4.2 Caregiver Training and Communication Strategies

8. Methods Used

- 8.1 Structured Group and One-on-One Teaching
- 8.2 Modeling and Imitation Techniques
- 8.3 Drama, Art Therapy, and Interaction-Based Learning
- 8.4 Continuous Observation and Feedback

9. Tools and Materials

- 9.1 Artistic Materials (Paint, Clay, Musical Instruments)
- 9.2 Visual Aids and Support Tools
- 9.3 Daily Living Simulations
- 9.4 Evaluation and Progress Tracking Forms

10. Results and Implementation Experiences

- 10.1 Improvements in Social and Emotional Development
- 10.2 Artistic Expression and Public Engagement
- 10.3 Impact of Family Participation
- 10.4 Collaborations with Municipalities and Institutions

11. Program Strengths and Innovations

- 11.1 Holistic and Inclusive Educational Model
- 11.2 Practical, Creative, and Adaptive Approach
- 11.3 Replicable Framework for Different Settings

12. Contact and Further Information

- 12.1 Accessing the Program
- 12.2 Application Procedures
- 12.3 Partnerships and Support Networks

N.DEGDER EXAMPLE 3

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Overview of ÖÇED and Its Mission
- 1.2 Purpose and Scope of the Training Program
- 1.3 Target Population and Justification

2. Pedagogical Objectives

- 2.1 Promoting Early Diagnosis Awareness
- 2.2 Supporting Informed Access to Special Education
- 2.3 Building Peer Support Among Families
- 2.4 Empowering Families for Home-Based Development
- 2.5 Enhancing Emotional Resilience and Parenting Skills

3. Program Duration and Structure

- 3.1 Frequency and Format (Weekly/Monthly Sessions)
- 3.2 One-on-One vs. Group-Based Support
- 3.3 Flexibility According to Family Needs

4. Suggested Target Groups

- 4.1 Families of Newly Diagnosed Children
- 4.2 Parents New to Autism and Special Education
- 4.3 Caregivers Seeking Emotional and Practical Guidance

5. Group Size and Delivery Format

- 5.1 Individual Counseling Sessions
- 5.2 Group Sessions with 8–12 Participants
- 5.3 Interactive and Personalized Approaches

6. Program Modules and Content

- 6.1 Individual Counseling
 - 6.1.1 Personalized Expert Guidance
 - 6.1.2 Addressing Unique Family Concerns
- 6.2 Group Meetings
 - 6.2.1 Experience Sharing and Peer Learning
 - 6.2.2 Community Building Among Parents
- 6.3 Thematic Workshops
 - 6.3.1 Early Intervention and Its Impact
 - 6.3.2 Behavior Management Strategies
 - 6.3.3 Building a Supportive Home Learning Environment
 - 6.3.4 Legal Rights and Access to Public Services
 - 6.3.5 Teaching Autism-Friendly Daily Life Skills

7. Methods Used

- 7.1 Peer Support and Parent Networks
- 7.2 Case Study-Based Learning
- 7.3 Hands-On Practice with Expert Trainers
- 7.4 Interactive Seminars, Panels, and Workshops

8. Tools and Materials

- 8.1 Digital Platforms: Web Portal and Social Media
- 8.2 Printed and Visual Educational Content
- 8.3 Recorded Webinars and Video Guides
- 8.4 Customized Parent Guidebooks

9. Examples of Educational Materials

- 9.1 Early Intervention Guide – A foundational resource for parents
- 9.2 Home-Based Educational Activity Cards – Practical routines and play-based learning
- 9.3 Rights and Support Handbook – Navigating diagnosis and service access
- 9.4 Daily Life Skills Guide for Autism – Teaching hygiene, eating, and dressing skills

10. Results and Implementation Experiences

- 10.1 Overview of Family Reach and Participation
- 10.2 Evidence of Developmental Progress in Children
- 10.3 Feedback-Based Continuous Program Improvement
- 10.4 ÖÇED's Role in Policy Advocacy and Family Empowerment

11. Program Strengths and Impact

- 11.1 Scientifically Grounded and Family-Centered Approach
- 11.2 Practical Tools for Everyday Parenting
- 11.3 Strengthened Family Networks and Advocacy Power
- 11.4 Recognition of Early Diagnosis as a Critical Step

12. Contact and Participation

- 12.1 How to Apply for the Program
- 12.2 Access to Resources and Ongoing Support
- 12.3 Partnerships and Volunteer Opportunities

POLAND EXAMPLE 1

Name of training programme/activity/method:Support for Parents of Children with Disabilities in Poland

Implementer/Organisation:Olinek Intensive Care Centre

Target group:Children with disabilities and their parents

Website:<https://olinek.com.pl/wsparcie-dla-rodzicow-dzieci-z-niepelnosprawnosciami-w-polsce-pelen-przeglad-zasobow-i-wsparcia/>

Content

Introduction

Olinek is a professional, highly specialised centre that provides comprehensive, intensive rehabilitation for children and young people. It was created in 2006 by the parents of the disabled Ola. Thanks to its exceptionally friendly atmosphere, within a few years it became embedded in the consciousness of parents and specialists as a place open to the needs and expectations of patients. Today, it is one of the most frequently chosen rehabilitation centres by parents of disabled children from Poland and abroad.

The centre offers various types of support for parents and children with disabilities. Here is a selection of what is on offer:

Functional Therapy - Olinek Suit

Olinek Suit Therapy is the use of a dynamic torso and lower limb orthosis in functional therapy for young patients. By being made of specially selected, flexible materials, it improves body stability and enables body correction. The Olinek Suit is an extremely effective tool in the hands of the therapist. It has applications for people with reduced muscle tone, sensory integration disorders, involuntary movements, tremors or pathological patterns. Thanks to its properties, it contributes to improving body sensation and awareness, normalising muscle tension, correcting body alignment and, consequently, improving fine and gross motor function. When used appropriately, it is an excellent complement to functional therapy, facilitating processes of so-called motor learning.

NDT Bobath

NDT Bobath therapy is a method for stimulating a child's cognitive and motor development. It is characterised by a comprehensive approach including knowledge of physiotherapy, occupational therapy, sensory integration or speech therapy. It also involves adapting the environment and equipment to the needs of our charges. At Olinek, we focus on making sure that the therapy is functional, individual and adapted to the child's abilities and age. We start with an interview, a thorough observation and examination and the identification of a common goal - parents and therapist. Such a detailed analysis of each of our clients allows us to develop a comprehensive therapy plan.

Vojta method



Vojta therapy is one of the main methods used in neurorehabilitation. The method is based on the rolling back of reflexes and thus aims to restore movement patterns that have been lost or distorted due to illness. During stimulation, the child is placed in individually selected positions and selected points on the body, the so-

called stimulation zones, are pressed. During triggering, a response from the trunk and limb muscles is observed in the form of coordinated movements.

Hand therapy



Hand therapy is a class in which we focus on the correct function of the entire upper limb. The hand is an organ of movement responsible for many functions. The hand is the organ of movement and is responsible for many functions, such as lifting and carrying objects, as well as precise tasks such as fastening buttons, tying shoelaces and writing. The exercises

and methods we choose take into account the individual needs and abilities of each child.

Sensory integration



It is a process during which the human nervous system receives information from the receptors of all the senses: touch, the vestibular system which receives movement, body sensation, i.e. proprioception, smell, sight, hearing, taste, then organises and interprets this information so that it can be used in purposeful action.

Neurologist



The specialisation of speech therapy dealing with the diagnosis and therapy of various forms of communication disorders caused by damage to the central nervous system in both children and adults. In his work, the neurologist is primarily concerned with speech therapy in children and non-speaking people and feeding therapy in children and people with eating disorders. Neurologopaedic therapy is designed for people who, as a result of various factors (accidents, injuries, illnesses, developmental and perinatal factors), have lost or have difficulty in mastering normal speech skills. We always adapt the therapy to the individual needs, abilities and expectations of the patient.

Rehabilitation holidays after hip surgery



and pain-free hip.

Hip joint abnormalities are the second most common musculoskeletal abnormality seen in people with cerebral palsy. It is estimated that 1 in 3 people are affected. Reconstructive surgery is indicated for children with a migration rate above 40%. The aim of the surgical procedure is to provide a mobile, correctly centred

NBIA camps



The Olinek Intensive Therapy Centre demonstrates many years of experience in the rehabilitation of patients with NBIA. Thanks to close cooperation with research centres and comprehensive care in physiotherapy, occupational therapy, neurology, vision therapy and orthotics, we use the most modern methods and equipment.

During the courses, there is the opportunity to fully assess the patient (examination of functional status, measurement of mobility ranges and muscle tension), determination of the main problem and the therapeutic goal important to the patient and his/her carers), an individual therapy plan, and adjustment of rehabilitation equipment. Thanks to the individualised approach to the patient, we are able to tailor the appropriate therapy and intervention to the patient's main problems, thus achieving the goals more quickly.

Culinary training for children



Our Culinary Turnout is an innovative therapeutic programme that combines hand therapy with practical cooking activities. The aim of the camp is not only to improve the children's manual skills, but also to teach them how to carry out daily activities

independently, thus increasing their independence and self-confidence. During the course of the holiday, the children will participate in a variety of cooking workshops, which have been designed to support the development of fine motor skills, eye-hand coordination and sensory

integration. These activities not only provide practical skills, but are also an excellent opportunity to develop social and communication skills.

Rehabilitation holidays before SDR surgery

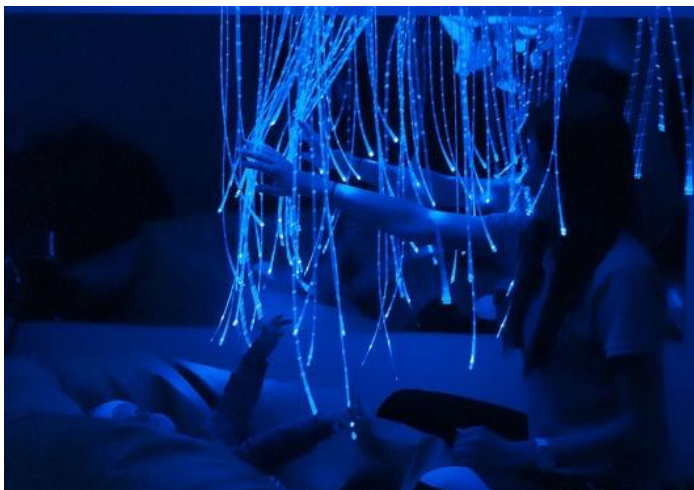


Selective dorsal root rhizotomy (SDR) is one method of treating lower limb spasticity. The operation involves cutting a selected part of the sensory fibres running in the dorsal roots of the spinal nerves. As a result of cutting, the amount of sensory impulses

reaching the spinal cord is reduced, thus reducing the amount of motor impulses running to the muscles, thus reducing spasticity.

As for the other points in the diagram: each type of support and therapy has its own specificities. Below is a detailed description for two selected types of therapy

World Experience Room



It is an extraordinary therapy room that stimulates and stimulates the senses. It is designed for children who, due to illness and limited mobility:

- cannot play like their peers
- have never been to a cinema, a playground or an amusement park

- have impaired vision or can only see large contrasts
- are afraid of noise, unfamiliar sounds and movement
- have olfactory hypersensitivity or are only able to detect a distinct intense odour

Come to the World Experience Room and we will help you, through multisensory therapy, to experience things that your child cannot discover on their own:

He will be transported to the depths of a maritime adventure where, like a sailor, he will traverse the seas and oceans lying on a waterbed and, more than once, he will be caught in a storm with wonderfully colourful fish swimming around him. In addition, he will be able to feel the gentle breeze on his skin and the wind blowing his hair away.

We take a virtual walk in the forest, where the fir trees and wild strawberries are fragrant. We will collect real pinecones, touch the bark of trees and listen to the sounds of birds and wild animals. And a shimmering rain of meteorites will fall from the sky.

We will enter a world of magic where we will look in a magical mirror and find out who is the most beautiful in the world. Ideas for fun in our land are plentiful, and each visit provides new impressions and shows its beauty and diversity.



The room is equipped with:

- balance-stimulating waterbed
 - mirrors, suspended and mobile lights, visual stimulation
 - lamps, light block and light column
 - projector and spotlights
- giving the effect of a moving cloudy and starry sky
- aromatherapy kits for olfactory stimulation
 - structured sets, stimulating touch

World experience rooms are becoming increasingly popular in supporting the development of children with disabilities. Their unique construction and purposeful design allow for a safe and interactive environment that can help children overcome challenges. Below we will discuss the benefits of using a world experience room and its impact on children with disabilities.



What is the World Experience Room?

The world experience room is a specially designed space that aims to stimulate different senses through interactive toys and technology. Featuring a variety of equipment such as balloon machines, UV lights, soft poufs,

sensory mats and more, the world experience room creates a unique environment that engages and develops a child's senses.

What are the benefits of using the World Experience Rooms for children with disabilities?

1. sensory development: World experience rooms are designed to stimulate a child's senses, which can help develop sensory skills. Children can interactively experience a variety of auditory, visual and tactile stimuli, which can benefit children with sensory disorders such as autism spectrum disorders.
- 2 Improving concentration and attention: World experience rooms can help children with ADHD or other disorders that make concentration difficult. The varied stimuli provided in the room can help children to focus their attention, which in turn can help to improve their ability to learn and concentrate.
- 3 Reducing stress and anxiety: world experience rooms can be hugely beneficial for children who are experiencing stress, anxiety or hyperactivity. They offer a safe and calming environment that can help children relax and feel comfortable.
- 4 Supporting motor development: with interactive toys and space to move around, world experience rooms can help children with motor disabilities to develop coordination, balance and precision.

Summary:

World experience rooms are an innovative therapeutic tool that can bring many benefits to children with disabilities. By supporting sensory development, improved concentration, reduced stress and anxiety and motor development, these specialised spaces can definitely contribute to a child's quality of life and development. For parents and carers looking for effective ways to support their child, a world experience room can be a great place to start.

Rehabilitation holidays for children with autism



Autism spectrum disorders are a group of heterogeneous neurodevelopmental disorders manifested at multiple levels. Embracing autism spectrum disorders requires viewing and inquiring into the complete vast totality of developmental conditions. From a functional

perspective and in the context of zero initial conditions (those with which the child appears at the first consultation), we consider as a measurable and time-varying value, crucial in estimating the required support for succession, his or her adaptive capacity - where awareness of IAM as a person, of his or her body schema and of the surrounding space is fundamental. This often remains the starting point in therapy - because a child with deficits on these levels will not use the motor skills (that he or she has) for functional purposes concerning self-care and symbolic play. The clinical picture that children with autism may present includes the following.

- lack of verbal language use/ barrier to verbal language use/ lack of pragmatic skills
- not using gestures to communicate with the environment
- lack of understanding or difficulty in understanding gestures of social significance
- lack of complex social behaviours that combine gaze, facial expression, gesticulation and tone of voice at the same time

- inadequate reactions to messages
- difficulties in identifying feelings
- difficulty in identifying other people's beliefs
- difficulties in understanding the reasons for the actions of others/ problems in the area of cognitive empathy
- Difficulties in responding appropriately emotionally to another person's state of mind/ problems in the area of emotional empathy
- unusual, schematic play/ interest in toys without using their functions
- attachment to patterns
- motor stereotypes
- unusual sensitivity to stimuli
- motor dysfunctions
- neuropsychiatric symptoms (hyperactivity, sleep disturbances, irritability, difficulty concentrating attention, aggression, self-aggression)
- gastroenterological problems
- extrapyramidal symptoms, epilepsy, dyskinesias, intellectual disability
- disorders of sensory integration processes

Objectives of the camp

- improving motor skills
- balancing hypokinetic/hyperkinetic movement disorders
- improving social skills
- elimination of sensory deficits
- identifying the child's strengths
- identification of the main functional problem
- improving postural and locomotor functioning

- improvement in eye-hand coordination functioning
- development of self-care skills
- implementing/improving the communication process
- instruction and education in activities appropriate to enhance psychomotor development
- instruction in relaxation techniques

Methods used

- Functional Therapy
- Hand therapy
- Sensory Integration
- Neurology
- TUS
- Cranio Sacral Therapy
- Hyperbaric chamber

Equipment used

- We adapt the equipment individually to the child

Details of the camp

- identifying the child's strengths
- identification of the main functional problem
- improving postural and locomotor functioning
- improvement in eye-hand coordination functioning
- development of self-care skills
- implementing/improving the communication process

- instruction and education in activities appropriate to enhance psychomotor development
- instruction in relaxation techniques
- 3 weeks
- 1x daily 1h physical therapy
- 1x daily 1h hand therapy
- 1x daily 1h sensory integration therapy
- 1x per week 1 hour of cranio-sacral therapy
- 2x a week 1h neurology
- additionally, depending on the patient's needs, TUS / hyperbaric chamber / other therapies available in the centre's offer
- We recommend an individual consultation with a physiotherapist before the start of your stay to plan your therapy
- Bring with you up-to-date medical documentation (MRI, hip X-ray, hospital discharge, medical recommendations, etc.).

Source: <https://olinek.com.pl/wsparcie-dla-rodzicow-dzieci-z-niepelnosprawnosciami-w-polsce-pelen-przeglad-zasobow-i-wsparcia/>

POLAND EXAMPLE 2

Name of training program/activity/method: Forum Against Depression Campaign

Implementer/Organization: The Forum Against Depression Campaign has been organized since 2007 by Servier Polska, which, among other things, provides help and support to people struggling with depression.

Target group: Its goal is to spread knowledge about depression and to make society aware that it is not a condition that passes, but an illness that needs to be treated.

This campaign is also intended to help overcome the resistance and reluctance of sick people and their families to go to doctors, therapists and support groups. Activities carried out as part of the campaign are aimed at both sick people and their families who have to struggle with depression on a daily basis, as well as healthy people who are interested in this issue.

Forum Against Depression is held under the substantive patronage of the President of the Polish Psychiatric Association

Website: www.forumprzeciwdepresji.pl

this is a website that was created for people suffering from depression and those whose relatives or friends struggle with this disease. Through it, you can obtain a lot of information about the symptoms, course and methods of treating depression and take the Beck test, i.e. check your mental well-being. The website also contains news and detailed information about the current edition of the campaign.

www.facebook.com/ForumPrzeciwDepresji

is a fanpage on Facebook, where detailed information about the campaign is posted on an ongoing basis, as well as scientific reports, knowledge contests and art competitions.

Content

Depression is not just a temporary lowering of mood, lack of interest in the world around you and reluctance to take up activity. It is a chronic disorder that affects all environments and professional groups regardless of social status and standard of living, a condition that returns more and more often and more strongly. It is a disease.

Forum Against Depression is a development initiative. We use the latest achievements, but we are open to cooperation with all environments and institutions that operate in the area of helping patients struggling with depression and their loved ones. We know how difficult it is to reach the patient. We know that without professional care and support, the patient is unable to fight the disease, but we also know that appropriate therapy and a positive attitude will allow them to return to health and an active life.

Diferent pages

News (examples, are updated on an ongoing basis depending on needs and events)



May 29, 2025

Does depression have a “holiday”?

Many people associate the summer months with a time of rest, sun, and vacation. Longer days, more light, and relatively better weather conditions seem to be conducive to good...



April 30, 2025

Loneliness Quietly – a New Mental Health Epidemic

A growing number of studies and social analyses indicate that loneliness is becoming one of the most pressing health problems in modern societies[1]. Although it may seem personal, individual...



March 31, 2025

How to Reduce Microstress That Accompanies Us at Work?

Chronic stress in the workplace is a risk factor for depression, anxiety disorders, and a general deterioration in mental well-being.

Depression

ABOUT THE DISEASE



ANYONE CAN HAVE DEPRESSION



I AM ILL WITH DEPRESSION



MY LOVED ONE HAS DEPRESSION



WHERE TO LOOK FOR HELP?



DEPRESSION AND WORK



DEPRESSION IN ART



SUICIDE



LIBRARY (GUIDES AND BOOKS)



Teenage Depression



When a child begins to mature and enter adulthood – they change. This is a natural stage. It is difficult for both the child and the parent, who often really does not know what to think about these changes and how to react to them. The question often arises whether the observed changes are the result of adolescent rebellion that is part of the natural process of development or whether they indicate a more serious problem, such as an illness – depression.



The first association when we talk about depression is sadness, low mood. Even in everyday language, we use this word to describe depression, bad mood. In teenagers suffering from depression, the symptoms that come to the fore may differ from those that most often occur in adults. Often, the most visible are irritation and irritability. A young person easily becomes angry or desperate, sometimes showing hostility towards the environment, discouraging closer contact.

Depression in the medical sense is an illness and should be distinguished from temporary depression, low mood or a short-term reaction to a difficult situation.

Depression is an increasingly common health problem that can occur in very different periods of a person's life. It is estimated that in Poland up to 20% of young people suffer from depressive disorders, and some data indicate that depressive symptoms can be found in every third teenager.

INFORMATION FOR DIFFERENT GROUPS

Choose an interesting topic stop below and learn even more about teenage depression!

TEENAGE ZONE



PARENT ZONE



TEACHER ZONE



DEPRESSION STOP



HELP POINT MAP



Included topics: TOPIC Teachers Mindful Parent Academy physical activity anhedonia research disease heart disease diabetes depression diet scientific reports children journalists open day education Forum Against Depression social campaign competition depression treatment doctor drugs anxiety media brain youth teenager teenagers teenage depression symptoms patient help psychiatrist psychologist psychotherapy parents stress training training school therapy faces of depression disorders mental health

Source: <https://forumprzeciwdepresji.pl/o-kampanii>

POLAND EXAMPLE 3

Name of training programme/activity/method:What should effective collaboration with parents look like in a nursery school?

Implementer/Organisation:KINDERGARTEN DIRECTOR'S MONITOR

Target group:Parents, Teachers, Education Management

Cooperation with parents in the kindergarten is one of the key elements to support the child's development. Effective communication and the involvement of carers in the educational process benefit both children and teachers. Children whose parents actively participate in the life of the kindergarten often cope better emotionally and socially, show more self-confidence and adapt more easily to new situations.

Website:Cooperation with parents in kindergarten - effective strategies - Magazine for directors of public and non-public kindergartens - MonitorPrzedszkola.pl

Content



Goals of working with parents in the kindergarten - why is it so important?

Effective cooperation between teacher and parents is based on a common goal - the all-round development of the child. To achieve this, it is useful to identify the main tasks and priorities:

- Supporting the child's development - the exchange of information between the teacher and parents allows for better adaptation of working methods to the individual needs of the preschooler.

- Building consistent parenting principles - the congruence of approaches at home and in the nursery positively influences the child's sense of security and social-emotional development.
- Involving parents in the life of the kindergarten - joint activities such as workshops, themed meetings or team-building activities strengthen the teacher-parent relationship and build a sense of community.

Benefits of parental involvement

Parents who are actively involved in their children's pre-school education often have a better understanding of their toddler's needs and can support them more effectively in their development. This cooperation has numerous benefits:

- The child feels safer because he or she perceives that his or her immediate environment acts cohesively.
- Teachers can better adapt the curriculum to the individual needs of the group.
- Parents are more aware of their child's progress and difficulties, which allows for early detection of possible educational or parenting problems.

Cooperation with preschool parents should not be limited to meetings or occasional conversations - creating a space for regular and open communication is crucial.

Effective communication with parents - how to build relationships?

Successful cooperation with parents at the kindergarten starts with good communication. Open dialogue, mutual trust and regular contact mean that teachers and parents can support the child's development together. It is important that contact is clear, frequent and tailored to the needs of both parties. This way, parents feel involved in the life of the kindergarten and teachers can better understand the individual needs of their pupils.

Best methods of communication with parents

Effective communication with parents is not limited to meetings or occasional conversations - it should be systematic and multi-faceted. Every family has different preferences for forms of contact, so it is useful to use a variety of methods:

- One-to-one meetings - allow you to discuss in detail your child's progress, difficulties and ways to support them. Regular discussions in a calm atmosphere help to build a relationship of trust.
- Group meetings - provide an opportunity to communicate important information to all parents, present teaching plans and discuss the organisation of the pre-school.
- Online communication - the use of emails, groups on educational platforms, kindergarten apps or newsletters facilitates the rapid communication of relevant information and ongoing updates.
- Contact book or nursery diary - a tool that allows daily contact between the teacher and parents, especially for children with special support needs.
- Information boards and pre-school newspapers - a traditional but still effective method of sharing important information and reports on pre-school events.

Adapting forms of communication to parents' preferences makes cooperation more effective and parents more willing to be involved in the life of the kindergarten.

Openness, understanding and respect as foundations for effective cooperation

Regardless of the method of communication chosen, the teacher's attitude and the way in which conversations are conducted are crucial. Relationship building with parents should be based on:

- Openness - the teacher should be accessible to parents, ready to listen to their opinions and suggestions.
- Understanding - every parent has different experiences and approaches to parenting, so it is important to treat their needs with empathy.
- Respect - building relationships based on mutual respect makes cooperation work in a friendly atmosphere.

It is important that teachers avoid criticising and judging parents - instead, it is worth focusing on constructive solutions that support the child's development.

How to respond to difficult situations and differences in parenting approaches?

Cooperation with parents is not always smooth - differences in approach to parenting and sometimes even conflicts may arise. It is important that the teacher maintains professionalism and strives for agreement.

Here are some rules that help in difficult situations:

- Active listening - give the parent space to express their concerns and opinions. Often just listening to the other side helps to ease the tension.
- Avoiding confrontation - instead of focusing on differences, it is useful to look for common solutions that will benefit the child.
- Clear presentation of the facts - if the problem concerns a child's behaviour, it is useful to rely on concrete examples and observations rather than subjective judgements.
- Offer cooperation - instead of putting parents in front of ready-made solutions, it is worth asking their opinion and working out a plan of action together.

The kindergarten teacher not only has an educational role, but also a mediating role - the ability to build relationships and resolve conflicts is crucial for effective cooperation with parents. Effective communication with parents is the foundation of successful cooperation and influences the atmosphere in the kindergarten and the development of the child. The use of a variety of contact methods, openness and flexibility in conversations and the ability to resolve difficult situations are key elements that help to build positive relationships.

When parents feel part of the pre-school community, they are more involved in the life of the institution and more willing to support their child's development. This is why it is so important for teachers to ensure systematic and transparent communication, based on mutual respect and cooperation.



Preschool parent cooperation plan - how to develop it effectively?

Effective cooperation with nursery school parents cannot be casual - it requires a well thought-out plan that takes into account the needs of children, teachers and carers. Clear rules, regular communication and various forms of parental involvement help to build positive relationships and support the child's development together.

Preschool parent cooperation programme - what elements should it contain?

A well-developed pre-school parent cooperation programme should take into account different aspects of the child's education and upbringing. The plan should be flexible and adapted to the specifics of the establishment and the needs of the families.

Key areas of cooperation: education, emotional development, educational support

Effective co-operation with parents in the kindergarten covers three main areas: education, the child's emotional development and educational support. Adequate involvement of carers in these aspects allows for consistent action both in the centre and at home.

- Education - teachers can support parents in developing their child's skills by sharing tips on teaching methods and organising thematic activities that involve parents.
- Emotional development - collaboration should include discussions about the child's emotions, their relationship with peers and how to support them to build confidence and independence.
- Parental support - teachers can advise parents on issues related to their child's behaviour, setting boundaries and developing values and social norms.

The better parents and teachers cooperate in these areas, the easier it is for the child to adapt to group life and develop his or her skills.

The teacher's role in involving parents and building a positive atmosphere

The kindergarten teacher plays a key role in establishing the relationship between the kindergarten and the child's family. He or she is the one who initiates and coordinates activities that encourage the parents to take an active part in the life of the establishment.

To engage parents effectively, it is worthwhile:

- Provide open and friendly communication - meeting regularly and communicating your child's progress helps build trust.
- Adapt the forms of cooperation to the needs of families - not every parent has time to visit the kindergarten frequently, so it is worth offering flexible solutions (e.g. participation in online initiatives).
- Encourage active participation - organising events in which parents can participate (e.g. workshops, picnics, reading stories together) increases their involvement.
- Show gratitude for involvement - valuing parents' contribution to the life of the kindergarten motivates them to continue working together.

A well-developed plan for cooperation with kindergarten parents creates a strong community in which everyone works towards a common goal - the harmonious development of the child.

Educating parents in kindergarten - how to effectively support their parenting competences?

Cooperation with parents at the kindergarten is not only limited to reporting on the child's progress - supporting parents in their role as educators is equally important. Not every carer has sufficient knowledge about their child's development, methods to support their emotions or to build good study habits. Therefore, educating parents in the kindergarten is an important part of cooperation, helping to build a coherent educational approach and better understanding of the needs of the youngest.

The importance of educating parents about child development and their needs

Parents are their children's first and most important teachers, so their knowledge of their child's development and upbringing is crucial to the child's proper functioning in the kindergarten. Cooperation between teachers and parents makes it possible to detect behavioural difficulties

early, to support proper emotional development and to adapt teaching methods to the individual needs of the child.

Parent pedagogy in the kindergarten allows:

- developing an awareness of the child's developmental stages and needs,
- education to support social and emotional competences,
- early recognition of signals that may indicate educational or emotional difficulties,
- building consistent educational principles between home and kindergarten.

Through education, parents become more aware and confident in their parenting decisions, resulting in better group functioning and overall development of the child.

Parent education in kindergarten - forms of support

There are many ways to effectively support parents in their educational role. It is important to adapt pedagogical methods to the needs of the particular group of parents and to find ways of involving them in active cooperation with the kindergarten.

The most common forms of support are:

- Workshops and thematic training sessions - meetings with experts (e.g. psychologist, speech and language therapist, SI therapist) that provide practical knowledge on parenting and child development.
- Speeches and lectures - shorter educational formats, e.g. during parent meetings, where teachers raise important educational issues.
- One-to-one consultations - discussions between teachers and parents about a particular child and how to support their development.
- Educational materials - brochures, articles, videos or newsletters with practical parenting tips.
- Interactive meetings - joint parent-child activities that show how to support children's development through play (e.g. sensory activities, educational games).

It is crucial that parent pedagogy is carried out in a way that engages parents rather than imposing ready-made solutions - then they will be more likely to use the forms of support offered.

Cooperation with parents in kindergarten - examples of good practice

Parental involvement in the life of the kindergarten has a positive impact on the development of children, strengthens relationships within the kindergarten community and builds a sense of shared responsibility for the education of the youngest. Cooperation does not have to be limited to formal meetings - there are many creative ways to actively involve parents in the day-to-day activities of the kindergarten.

Examples of activities involving parents in the life of the kindergarten

In order to work effectively with parents in the kindergarten, it is useful to use various forms of activation that take into account parents' interests and time possibilities. The following are tried and tested initiatives that help to build an engaged preschool community.

| Action | Description | Benefits |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Open days | Parents can observe classes and learn about teachers' working methods. | Better understanding of the functioning of the kindergarten, integration into the educational environment. |
| Family picnics and festivals | Organising outdoor events with games and competitions for children and adults. | Building relationships in the pre-school community, strengthening the parent-child bond. |
| Joint educational projects | Parents are involved in the creation of educational materials, e.g. themed scrapbooks, science experiments. | Developing children's creativity and integrating home and pre-school activities. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Workshops for parents | Thematic meetings with psychologist, speech therapist, pedagogue on child development. | Improving parenting competences, exchange of experiences between parents. |
| Participation in thematic activities | Parents give short presentations about their profession, passions, culture. | Expanding children's knowledge, inspiring learning and exploring new interests. |
| Reading initiatives ("Parent reads to children") | Parents visit the kindergarten and read fairy tales, stories and poems to the children. | Promoting language development and interest in books. |
| Co-creation of pre-school events | Parents help to organise performances, concerts and fairs. | Building community, fostering a sense of responsibility for the pre-school. |

How to implement an effective cooperation system and monitor its effectiveness?

To be effective and of real benefit, cooperation with parents should be systematic and flexible. It is crucial that teachers regularly propose different forms of involvement and adapt them to parents' expectations and possibilities.

Steps to effective collaboration:

1. **Needs diagnosis** - at the beginning of the year, it is worth conducting a survey among parents to find out what forms of cooperation they find most attractive.
2. **Planning activities** - preparing a schedule of initiatives and events so that parents can plan in advance to participate.

3. **Regular communication** - informing parents of opportunities for collaboration through meetings, online platforms, posters in the nursery.
4. **Flexibility** - offering different forms of engagement, both onsite and online, allows us to fit in with parents' different lifestyles.
5. **Monitor effects** - it is useful to collect parents' feedback on the activities organised and make any modifications.

Summary

Effective cooperation between teachers and parents is based on open communication, mutual respect and involvement in the child's development. It is crucial to adapt contact methods to the needs of families and to regularly monitor the effectiveness of the actions taken.

The involvement of parents in the life of the kindergarten creates a friendly educational environment that promotes the harmonious development of the child. Joint initiatives, workshops or active participation in the day-to-day running of the establishment build a cooperative community.

Parent pedagogy and various forms of cooperation help to better prepare the child for further education and strengthen the relationship between the kindergarten and the family. It is useful to implement flexible strategies that involve parents at different levels, providing them with support and motivation to actively participate in the educational process.

Sources:

1. <https://monitorprzedszkola.pl/artykul/wspolpraca-przedszkola-z-rodzicami>
2. <https://monitorprzedszkola.pl/plik/plan-wspolpracy-z-rodzicami-dyrektora-przedszkola>
3. <https://monitorprzedszkola.pl/plik/plan-wspolpracy-z-rodzicami>
4. <https://www.wychowanieprzedszkolu.com.pl/plik/raporty-i-sprawozdania-plan-wspolpracy-z-rodzicami-1>

5. <https://www.wychowaniewprzedszkolu.com.pl/arttykul/formy-wspolpracy-przedszkola-z-rodzicami-aspekt-praktyczny>
6. <https://www.wychowaniewprzedszkolu.com.pl/arttykul/jak-zbudowac-skuteczna-wspolprace-z-rodzicami-przedszkolaka>

SLOVAKIA EXAMPLE 1

Raising a Child with Autism Spectrum Disorders

Name of training programme/activity/method: Website with Guidelines for Relatives

Implementer/Organisation: Association for Helping People with Autism

Target group: Families of children with autism spectrum disorders

Website: <https://www.sposa.sk/>

Raising a child with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) has the same goal as raising a neurotypical child – to prepare them for an independent life. However, due to the specific characteristics and uniqueness of autistic children, conventional parenting approaches are often ineffective. Therefore, it is essential to approach their upbringing with understanding, patience, and empathy.



The **Association for Helping People with Autism (SPOSA)** is a civic association dedicated to supporting people with autism spectrum disorders and their families. Their website provides information about autism, its symptoms, diagnosis, and life with an autistic person. It offers practical advice for families, including parenting tips, leisure activities, and financial assistance. It also

focuses on the employment of people with autism and provides information on their integration into the workforce. SPOSA implements various projects and activities to raise awareness about autism and improve the quality of life for individuals with this complex developmental condition. The website also includes contact information and opportunities to support their activities.

An important section of the website is **information for families**.

Methodological Recommendations for Raising Children with ASD:

1. **Individualized Plan:** A child's development should consider their level of social adaptation, communication, and cognitive abilities.

2. **Adaptation of the Environment:** Creating a safe and structured environment with clearly defined areas for specific activities supporting the child's orientation skills.
3. **Clear Daily Schedule:** Establishing a daily routine tailored to the child's individual needs, which they can understand and follow, for example, using visual aids.
4. **Personalized Motivation System:** Developing a motivational plan based on the child's psychological profile.
5. **Clear Communication System:** Communication should be adapted to the child's mental age, level of understanding, and language skills.
6. **Learning Through Reality:** Due to common impairments in symbolic thinking, it is beneficial to develop the child's abilities through real objects and situations.



Areas of Child Development with ASD:

- **Independence Training:** Includes practicing hygiene, eating, dressing, personal care, and simple household tasks.
- **Development of Intellectual and Physical Abilities:** Focuses on communication, social, and motor skills.

Communication Skills:

Preschool-aged children with autism form a diverse group with various communication difficulties. Many do not speak, their understanding of speech lags behind their verbal expression, and they often interpret information literally.

Steps for Working with an Autistic Child:

1. **Analysis of Communication Style and Level:** Assessing verbal expression, gestures, facial expressions, and overall behaviours.

2. **Selection of Appropriate Communication Tools:** Identifying the most natural communication method for the child, whether through objects, pictures, signs, music, or speech.
3. **Continuous Expansion of Vocabulary:** Gradual vocabulary development with consideration of the child's tendency for literal understanding and the context in which they use words.

Raising a child with ASD is a complex process requiring collaboration between families, professionals, and institutions, where an individualized approach and understanding of the child's unique needs are key factors.



Raising a child with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) affects the entire family, including parents, siblings, and other relatives. Parents should adjust their expectations, avoid comparing their family to others, and focus on developing their child's social and communication skills. An autistic child can place a strain on a parental relationship; in such cases, seeking professional help may be beneficial.

Siblings of autistic children typically develop normally and may be psychologically and emotionally more resilient. It is essential to inform the extended family about the child's condition and specific behaviours so they can understand its needs and learn how to interact with him/her.. When dealing with strangers, it is advisable to draw their attention to the child's differences, especially if its condition is not immediately apparent.

Source: <https://www.sposa.sk/rodina/vychova/>

SLOVAKIA EXAMPLE 2

Signing Playfully and Easily

Name of training programme/activity/method: Signing Playfully and Easily

Implementer/Organisation: Civic Association Rodinka výnimočných

Target group: Parents, teachers, and caregivers of children with special needs (e.g. Down syndrome, speech and hearing impairments, autism, ASD).

Website: <https://rodinkavynimocnych.sk/obcianske-zdruzenie/>

1. Description of education/training

The "*Signing Playfully and Easily*" program is a three-month online course focused on enhancing communication between parents (or teachers and caregivers) and children with special needs. The course includes the distribution of a set of specially illustrated picture and text cards that serve as a communication tool between adults and children. These cards help children better understand and express their needs, reducing frustration due to misunderstandings and fostering communication and relationships.



2. Pedagogical objectives

- Support the development of communication and spoken language skills in children with special needs.
- Provide parents and educators with tools for effective communication with the children.
- Reduce frustration and misunderstandings between children and adults.
- Strengthen the relationship between parents and children through improved communication.

3. **Duration of the education/training programme**

The program lasts three months and includes regular online meetings and consultations.

4. **Recommended target groups**

Parents, teachers, and caregivers of children with special needs, such as Down syndrome, speech and hearing impairments, autism, and other developmental conditions.

5. **Recommended number of participants per group**

Information on the recommended number of participants per group is not available.

6. **Modules, content, and a short description (Educational/Training Programme)**

- **Introduction to Sign Language:** Basic principles and significance of learning sign language for children with special needs.
- **Working with Cards:** How to effectively use picture and text cards in daily communication.
- **Development of Communication Skills:** Techniques to support spoken language and comprehension in children.
- **Managing Problematic Situations:** Strategies for managing challenging communication situations and reducing frustration.

7. **Methods used**

- Online teaching through interactive sessions.
- Practical exercises using picture and text cards.
- Discussions and experience-sharing among participants.
- Individual consultations and counselling.

8. **Tools used**

- A set of 120 signs and 150 words in the form of specially illustrated picture and text cards covering categories such as food, colours, people, clothing, activities, and means of transportation.

- An online platform for completing the course and communicating with participants.

9. Results and practical experiences

The program was developed based on the experience of the instructor, mother of three children, two of whom have special needs. Participants have reported improvements in communication with their children, leading to reduced frustration and strengthened relationships. Using the cards in everyday life has helped children better express their needs and understand their surroundings.



Source: <https://rodinkavynimocnych.sk/kurzy/>

SLOVAKIA EXAMPLE 3

Peer Counselling – Support for Parents of Children with Disabilities

Name of training programme/activity/method: "Peer Counselling – Support for Parents of Children with Disabilities"

Implementer/Organization: Platforma rodín detí so zdravotným znevýhodnením

Target group: Parents of children with disabilities

Website: <https://platformarodin.sk/>

1. Description of education/training

The Platform of Families of Children with Disabilities (Platforma rodín detí so zdravotným znevýhodnením) offers peer counselling through a network of parent counsellors. These counsellors are parents of children with disabilities who have completed a specialized training and provide support and guidance to other parents in similar situations.

2. Pedagogical objectives

- Provide emotional support and practical advice to the parents in caring for children with disabilities.
- Facilitate the sharing of experiences and best practices among parents.
- Empower parents in their role and help them better navigate available services and rights.

3. Duration of the education/training programme

The peer counselling service can be provided continuously based on the needs of parents.

4. Recommended target groups

Parents of children with disabilities seeking support and guidance.

5. Recommended number of participants per group:

Counselling can be provided individually or in small groups, depending on the needs of the parents.

6. Modules, content, and a short description (Educational/Training Programme)

- **Individual Counselling:** Personalized consultations focusing on the specific needs of families.
- **Group Meetings:** Discussions and experience-sharing sessions among parents.
- **Thematic Workshops:** Educational activities on specific topics related to caring for children with disabilities.

7. **Methods used:**

- Peer-to-peer counselling.
- Sharing individual experiences.
- Expert consultations and workshops.

8. **Tools used:**

- Online platform for communication.
- Educational materials and guides.

Examples from educational materials:

"Child Development at Home Through Daily Activities"

This initiative supports the parents and caregivers of children with disabilities in their everyday lives. The goal is to show how regular daily routines can be used to develop children's skills and abilities. The program provides practical tips and guidance to the parents regarding the integration of developmental activities into their everyday life.

Educational Material: "Child Development at Home – Waking Up"

This material provides practical tips to the parents on how to use the morning wake-up routine to support motor, communication, and social skills in children with disabilities. It emphasizes the importance of a calm and predictable start to the day, helping children feel secure and develop their abilities naturally. The program suggests activities such as gentle touch, simple verbal instructions, singing, or visual aids to incorporate into the morning routine, supporting the child's development.



Educational Material: "Child Development at Home – Hygiene"

This material provides practical recommendations to the parents on how to facilitate children's independence in hygiene routines. It focuses on daily activities such as handwashing, brushing teeth, and personal care, offering methods to adapt these tasks to the individual needs of children with disabilities. The material includes step-by-step instructions, visual aids, and motivation tips to help children acquire hygiene skills in a playful and natural way.



Educational Material: "Child Development at Home – Dressing"



This resource offers practical guides and tips to help children become more independent in dressing. It focuses on creating a supportive environment and gradually developing the skills needed for daily dressing. The material includes specific steps, visual aids, and motivation strategies to make this essential life skill easier to learn in a fun and natural way.

Educational Material: "Child Development at Home – Cooking and Eating"

This material provides practical tips and activities to the parents on how to engage children in meal preparation and dining. The aim is to support the development of fine motor skills, sensory perception, and independence through everyday kitchen activities. Tasks like opening bottles, pouring water, or seasoning food with herbs are designed to be fun while enhancing children's abilities. The material highlights the importance of shared meals and creating positive experiences related to food.



Educational Material: "Child Development at Home – Household Chores"



This guide provides practical tips to the parents on how to involve children with disabilities in daily household tasks. Activities such as tidying up and hanging laundry are designed to be engaging while supporting skill development. The material emphasizes patience and positive reinforcement, recommending that tasks be adapted to the child's abilities and turned into opportunities for learning and bonding.

9. Results and practical experiences

Since March 2021, 13 peer counsellors have been providing support to parents across Slovakia. This network was established in collaboration with seven non-governmental organizations and has been supported by the Active Citizens Fund and the Foundation for Children of Slovakia (Nadácia pre deti Slovenska). The service is free of charge and can be provided as a one-time consultation or ongoing support, depending on the family's needs.

Sources: <https://platformarodin.sk/>

<https://www.platformarodin.sk/inspirujme-sa/rozvoj-deti-doma/>

TÜRKİYE KIRIKKALE UNIVERSITY EXAMPLE 1

Early Intervention Program Based on Natural Teaching for Parents of Children with Down Syndrome (DÖDEM)

Name of the training program/activity/method: Family Applied Early Intervention Program

Implementer/Organization: Turkish Down Syndrome Association

Target group: Parents of Young Children with

Down Syndrome **Website:** <https://dodem.downturkiye.org/anasayfa>

PURPOSE/OBJECTIVES

The DÖDEM Program basically *aims to "Create a Consciousness that Hears-Hears-Responds Appropriately and Looks-Sees-Responds Appropriately to Parents in the Process of Supporting the Development of the Child."*

DEFINITION



DÖDEM is a family-based early intervention program developed to strengthen the interaction of parents of young children with Down Syndrome with their children and to support their children's development in routines, activities and transitions that occur during the day.

A significant portion of the website provides families with information on how to use the portal.

- The program consists of a total of 8 units, The first unit is automatically opened. You can access the unit welcome screen by clicking on any unit. The modules you have completed are updated with a green tick mark. The units you are currently continuing or will start are updated with a yellow arrow mark. The program automatically activates the next unit when each unit is completed; therefore, it is not possible to start Unit 2 before Unit 1 is completed .

- When you finish any unit, the system will automatically direct you to the program screen where the units are collectively located. The module you have finished will be updated with a green tick. You can continue to access this unit whenever you want. Completing the unit does not prevent you from accessing this unit again.
- When you click on any active unit, you will be presented with a pre-startup welcome screen. You can access the unit using the Get Started button located here.
- *In the example below, a detailed explanation is provided for Unit 1. All other units have the same features.*
- Units consist of consecutive slides. Each unit consists of multiple slides.
- After you have read the first slide, you can move between slides by clicking the Previous and Next buttons. In the 5 / 64 information between these buttons, 5 represents the number of the slide you are on and 64 represents the total number of slides. The number 5 here will change as you click the Previous or Next button.
- If you would like to ask our experts questions about the information on any slide, you can use the Ask a question button.
- When you click this button, you will be greeted by a screen like the one below. All questions you ask on this screen will appear on our experts' screens. When our experts answer your question, an automatic notification e-mail will be sent. Writing your question as detailed as possible on this screen will make it easier for experts to give a correct and qualified answer. If you have given up asking a question on this screen, you can close this screen by clicking the cross icon in the right corner and continue where you left off.
- Each slide of all units has been vocalized. Therefore, you can follow the entire program with sound by using the buttons below. If you do not follow with sound, you can turn off the sound of the program by clicking the Mute button.
- You can add any slide to your Favorite pages so that you can access it quickly later. To do this, you can click the star button next to the page numbers between the Previous and Next buttons.
- When you click the add to my favorite pages button, the star icon will turn yellow and it will automatically be added to your favorite pages. You can access your favorite pages both on the website and from the mobile application with the my favorite pages button.

- When you click on this button, all slides will open automatically and each slide you have favorited will be visible with a yellow star icon. When you click on the page number of your favorite page, you will automatically go to the relevant slide. You can use the cross icon in the upper right corner to close this screen.
- It is possible to print all slides related to the unit. When you click the Print button, the system directs you to a separate page without closing the program screen and automatically brings up the Print box.
- The printing features are automatically set to A4 page size and each slide will be on an A4 page. You can also print according to your own printer. Printing is only valid on our website. There is no printing feature in mobile applications.
- You can use the Return to Home button to exit the program or move on to other units.
- If you exit the program and move to another unit, completely close the site and mobile application, or refresh the page, the system will automatically start you from where you left off.
- In order to watch the videos in the units, a camera icon has been added next to each video.
- You can open the video by clicking on this icon. The video will not start automatically. You can watch your video using the controls in the video. When your video is finished, you can close the video by clicking the cross icon in the upper right corner.
- A book icon has been added next to each resource so that you can read the resources in the units.
- You can open the source by clicking on this icon. You can read the source using the controls on the screen that opens (right, left arrows, zoom in, zoom out, view table of contents, etc.). When you are done reading, you can close this screen by clicking on the cross icon in the upper right corner.
- At the end of each unit, there are questions related to the unit after the bibliography information. To answer the relevant questions, you can click on the box below the question and write your answers. After you finish answering, click on the Save button and wait for your answer to be saved to the system. After you receive the warning that your answer has been saved successfully, you can move on to the next question.
- After answering all the questions, there will be two buttons on the screen where you can start the unit from the beginning or end the unit. When you click on the Start Over

button from the relevant buttons, you will be directed to the first slide. When you click on the End Unit button, the system will record that you have finished this unit and activate the next section for you.

- will ask you to upload a video again, just like when registering, to move on to the next units . After uploading your video, you will have access to the next units.

When you complete the last unit, the system will direct you to upload the final video. After you upload your last videos, your videos will be evaluated by our experts and an e-mail will be sent to inform you that you have completed the program. With this e-mail, you will have a certificate of completion and lifetime access to the program.

BENEFITS/EXPECTED RESULTS

The prepared units have been converted into a tablet-computer application that parents can read and follow, and watch application videos on parenting behaviors and strategies.

- The program consists of a total of eight family training groups covering different topics.
- The application allows parents to choose the unit they want and read the relevant topic.
- In each unit where different topics are covered, parents can watch a video application about the information they read.
- It provides parents with the opportunity to practice on the relevant subject.
- At the end of each unit, parents are given the opportunity to evaluate themselves and the unit they read by recording their own voices.

The DÖDEM (Early Intervention Based on Natural Teaching) Program is a family-centered or family-based early intervention program for parents of children with Down syndrome. Experts who want to become program trainers receive both theoretical and practical training. The training is provided by Prof. Dr. İbrahim H. Diken and Dr. Faculty Member Gözde Tomris. The program is carried out as one day theoretical and one day practical and lasts four days in total. Within the scope of the theoretical training, theoretical information is conveyed on strengthening qualified adult-child interaction and natural teaching strategies. The first of the practical applications is carried out with face-to-face applications with a child and parent after the transfer of qualified adult-child interaction strategies. The second practical

application covers working on natural teaching strategies with a child and parent. In practical applications, the trainer first becomes a model for the trainees and interacts with the child and parent. Then, each trainee is ensured to interact with the child and parent for at least 15 minutes and to carry out their applications under the supervision of the trainer. Trainees are eligible to receive their practitioner certificate after completing the program and their supervision.

PRESENTATIONS

Source: <https://dodem.downturkiye.org/icerik/4-nasil-kullanirim>

Source: <https://akademi.downturkiye.org/program/41-dodem-egitmen-programi>

TÜRKİYE KIRIKKALE UNIVERSITY EXAMPLE 2

Online Parent Home Support Program (Project EV-DES)

Name of the training program/activity/method: Home Support Application

Implementer/Organization: Anadolu University

Target group: Parents of children with special needs such as (1) Mental Disability, (2) Autism Spectrum Disorder, (3) Visual Disability, (4) Hearing Disability, (5) Physical Disability, (6) Chronic Disability, (7) Speech and Language Disorder, (8) Multiple Disability, (9) Psychological and Emotional Disorder and (10) General Developmental Retardation in Early Childhood (0-8 Years Old)

Website: <https://www.evdedestekprojesi.com>

PURPOSE/OBJECTIVES

The aim of the project is to design the “Online Parent Home Support Program (Project EV-DES)” for parents of children diagnosed with developmental delay/disability in early childhood; to meet the needs of their children for information about their delay/disability and the skills to cope with these situations , to strengthen parents by supporting their psycho-social well-being, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

DEFINITION



PROJE EV-DES

In a significant part of the website, digital materials for 11 different disability groups are offered for families' use. After registering on the site, you can either search by entering a keyword in the search tab; for example, "behavior" or "autism" or "development", or you can click on the special needs groups and look at the details from there.

BENEFITS/EXPECTED RESULTS

At the end of Project EV-DES, the following three concrete products are aimed to emerge:

1. WRITTEN MATERIALS: Information for parents about their children's developmental delays/disabilities, meeting the skill needs of children regarding their delays/disabilities, supporting the psycho-social well-being of parents, written materials with scientific basis (brochures, posters, short and long information notes, etc.),

2. VISUAL MATERIALS: Visual materials (drawings and videos) containing the presentation of the knowledge, skills and strategies presented in written materials by experts in the relevant field.

3. WEB 2.0 BASED DIGITAL RESOURCE/DIGITAL PLATFORM: A comprehensive, free-to-access online digital platform that includes written and visual materials, scientific, up-to-date and parent/reader-friendly content from parents, and useful national and international links specific to the subject.

PRESENTATIONS

<https://www.evdedestekprojesi.com>

TÜRKİYE KIRIKKALE UNIVERSITY EXAMPLE 3

For Families of Students with Special Education Needs

CUSTOMIZED PARENTAL EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

Name of the training program/activity/method: Family Training Program

Implementer/Organization: General Directorate of Special Education and Guidance Services

Target group: Parents with Children with Special Education Needs

Website: <https://orgm.meb.gov.tr/www/ozellestirilmis-aile-programlari/icerik/3099>

PURPOSE/OBJECTIVES

This program has been prepared to support parents of children who need special education in their adaptation to the process after challenging life events. In line with this general purpose, it is envisaged that the parents in question will gain the following goals after challenging life events.

1. Realizing one's needs after a challenging life event.
2. Have knowledge about challenging life events
3. Understanding the importance of self-care after challenging life events.
4. Realizing the importance of communication after challenging life events and the barriers to communication during this period.
5. Realizing the existence and importance of support groups after challenging life events.

DEFINITION



The general principles of the program can be summarized as follows:

1. The program was prepared by determining the psychosocial support needs of parents of children

with special educational needs after challenging life events.

2. All parents have the right to benefit from the program on a voluntary basis.
3. Parents who work within the scope of the program are not considered as disadvantaged individuals, but as individuals who want to become stronger after the challenging event they have experienced.
4. The program is implemented individually, focusing on the subjective world of parents.
5. Self-care is among the basic needs of an individual. Therefore, it is important to meet this need even after challenging life events.
6. The individual is a being who is open to learning at every age and in every situation. Therefore, the level of awareness can be increased by providing information about challenging life events.
7. Communicating and sharing facilitates the understanding and normalization of the situation. Therefore, supporting communication behaviors and participating in support groups supports adaptation behaviors.
8. The program is designed to be semi-structured. It can be flexible according to the competencies of the guidance teacher/psychological counselor.

Other points to be considered in the implementation of the program are listed below:

- ✓ Before starting the empowerment program sessions, the guidance teacher/psychological counselor who will implement the program should carefully read the session plan and semi-structured session content and prepare the necessary tools and equipment, if any, before the event.
- ✓ Participation in the program is voluntary. Confidentiality must be maintained throughout the program. Parents should be encouraged to disclose themselves during the activities, but should not be forced.
- ✓ If the parent included in the program has symptoms that deeply hinder daily life in the acute period after the traumatic event or require a psychiatric diagnosis, they should be informed about getting help for this condition and directed to the relevant institutions.
- ✓ It is recommended that program sessions be held once a week for approximately 50 minutes, if possible.

BENEFITS/EXPECTED RESULTS

SESSIONS AND BENEFITS OF THE CUSTOMIZED PARENTAL EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

The Customized Parent Empowerment Program is designed in 5 sessions.

1. Getting to know and recognizing needs after a challenging life event.
 - Realizes his/her own and his/her child's needs.
 - Realizes the basic values of the family.
2. Education and information about challenging life events.
 - Recognizes the post-traumatic difficulties that occur in himself and his child.
 - Realizes the effects of challenging life events on himself and his child.
 - Understands strategies that can be used after a challenging life event.
3. Self-care and its dimensions.
 - Understands the importance of self-care in the face of challenging life events.
4. Communication and its barriers.
 - Understands the importance of interpersonal communication in challenging life events.
 - Recognizes communication barriers after challenging life events.
5. Assessment and support groups.
 - Identifies support groups during challenging life events.
 - He/she realizes the benefits of the program.

PRESENTATIONS

Source:

https://orgm.meb.gov.tr/meb_iys_dosyalar/2025_02/07102958_6ebeveynguclendirme09012_5.pdf

TÜRKİYE SAMDER EXAMPLE 1

TOHUM AUTISM FOUNDATION FAMILY EDUCATION AND SUPPORT PROGRAMS

TOHUM Autism Foundation runs a comprehensive education and support program for families of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The purpose of the program is to support the development of children with autism and to enable families to actively participate in their children's education and daily life processes by increasing their knowledge, skills, and self-confidence.

(<https://www.tohumotizm.org.tr> <https://www.tohumotizm.org.tr/egitim-hizmetlerimiz/aile-egitimleri>)

As part of the program, families are offered face-to-face workshops, online seminars, individual counseling, and support group meetings. Additionally, through the online training portal developed by Tohum Autism Foundation, families have access to modular educational content on understanding the characteristics of children with autism, managing behavioral challenges, skill development, and preparing them for social life. Families can follow these modules sequentially or select them according to their needs, enabling them to make a significant difference in their children's development.



The portal and program content primarily focus on children in the preschool period; however, they can be adapted according to the functional level and age of individuals with autism and are suitable for use with different age groups as well. Tohum Autism Foundation's approach is based on scientific principles and offers a holistic and practical model aimed at empowering and supporting families.

Objectives

- Increase families' knowledge and skills to support the development of children with autism: Provide families with comprehensive information about the core characteristics of autism spectrum disorder, their children's individual needs and developmental areas; equip

them with concrete and practical strategies they can use in daily life and educational processes.

- Assist parents in implementing teaching and behavior management strategies at home: Teach families techniques for creating structured teaching opportunities at home, reinforcing positive behaviors, reducing problem behaviors, and increasing the child's independence. This includes providing practical examples, case studies, and guidance support.
- Promote social support and solidarity among parents: Establish a social sharing and solidarity network where families can share experiences, find solutions to common challenges, and receive emotional support. Strengthen communication between families through support group meetings and online forums.
- Raise parents' awareness of available social services and rights: Inform families about social services, educational and health rights, government supports, and legal regulations accessible to their children, facilitating their access to these services and rights. Provide informative seminars and referral materials in this regard.

Target Group

Parents and primary caregivers of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder:

These include mothers, fathers, grandparents, siblings, guardians, professional caregivers, and other family members or close supportive individuals who are primarily responsible for the development, education, and daily needs of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). These individuals play a critical role in the child's social, emotional, communicative, and academic development; they take active responsibility in processes such as implementing the child's education plans, behavior management, teaching daily living skills, and social integration. Additionally, they facilitate access to necessary social and health services and establish support mechanisms for the child.

Activities Conducted

- Workshops: Conducted in small groups either face-to-face or online. Topics include behavior management, communication skills development, home teaching strategies, and learning through play.
- Online seminars: Short, topic-focused training sessions accessible nationwide.
- Individual guidance: One-on-one counseling tailored to families' specific questions and needs.
- Support groups: Regular meetings where parents share experiences and provide mutual support.
- Practical examples: Reinforcement through real case studies and role-playing activities.

Outcomes

- Increased knowledge levels of families regarding autism and educational approaches
- Improvement in parents' skills to create supportive home environments and participate in teaching processes
- Reduced social isolation and strengthened support and solidarity among parents
- Long-term progress in children's communication, self-care, and social skills

Strengths

- Scientifically based and practical content
- Accessible (online + face-to-face) and free/affordable options
- A structure that encourages active family participation
- Opportunity for long-term follow-up and support

TÜRKİYE SAMDER EXAMPLE 2

SELÇUKLU FOUNDATION for the EDUCATION of INDIVIDUALS with AUTİSM (SOBE)

SOBE (Social Skills Education Foundation) is a leading organization that supports the education, rehabilitation, and social integration processes of individuals with autism spectrum disorder. Its mission is to enable individuals with autism to become independent, productive, and fully participatory members of society; its vision is to develop innovative, effective, and widely recognized models both nationally and internationally. SOBE provides comprehensive education, counseling, and support services to families, individuals, and professionals through scientifically based methods. Guided by principles of collaboration and volunteerism, SOBE establishes strong partnerships with public institutions, non-governmental organizations, and families to create sustainable and effective solutions. Aiming to raise social awareness and enhance the social inclusion of individuals with disabilities, SOBE continues to be a pioneering and trusted resource in the field of autism in Turkey.



<https://www.sobe.org.tr/>

SOBE Foundation – Support and Education Programs for Families

- **Individual Counseling**

One-on-one guidance and counseling services are provided to meet the specific needs of families. This enables the development of personalized solutions tailored to each family's challenges, the child's characteristics, and the home environment.

- **Educational Seminars and Workshops**

Regular seminars and workshops are organized for families on topics such as autism spectrum disorder, behavior management, communication skills development, home teaching techniques, and daily living skills. These events can be offered both face-to-face and online.

- **Support Groups**

Regular support group meetings are organized where families can share similar experiences, receive emotional support, and engage in mutual solidarity. These settings help reduce social isolation and boost families' morale and motivation.

- **Information and Referral**

Families are informed about the rights of children with autism, available social and health services, educational opportunities, and government supports. Additionally, referrals to necessary institutions and professionals are provided.

- **Home Play and Education Support**

Practical training such as "How Can I Support My Child's Play Skills at Home?" encourages families to apply play and teaching strategies that support their child's development in the home environment.

- **Psychosocial Support**

Psychosocial support programs are offered to help families cope with stress, anxiety, and emotional challenges. This support enhances the overall well-being of the family, indirectly benefiting the child's development.

TÜRKİYE SAMDER EXAMPLE 3

TURKEY DOWN SYNDROME ASSOCIATION – FAMILY SUPPORT AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Turkey Down Syndrome Association is a strong and dynamic non-governmental organization dedicated to raising social awareness about Down syndrome and transforming perceptions of disability, while closely following current developments in this field both in Turkey and around the world. The association's mission is to combat discrimination faced by individuals with Down syndrome at all ages and in all circumstances — from infancy through adulthood — and to promote equal opportunities. Founded as a platform in 2009, formalized as an association in 2011, and officially named the Turkey Down Syndrome Association in 2019 with the approval of the Ministry of Interior, the association provides support to families, professionals, and institutions across the country through its headquarters in Istanbul and its branches and offices in Ankara, Adana, Tokat, Adıyaman, Eskişehir, İzmir, Kastamonu, and Manavgat. Actively connected with 35 countries in Europe and 136 countries worldwide through their Down syndrome organizations, the association serves as the Vice President of the Board of the European Down Syndrome Association and as Turkey's representative for Down Syndrome International. It also plays an active role in national collaborations, including the Network of Disabled Children's Rights, the Equal Rights in Education Platform, and the Rare Diseases Network. With its evidence-based programs that respond to real needs in the field, the Turkey Down Syndrome Association is a reliable and leading resource for individuals with Down syndrome, their families, and professionals.



<https://www.downturkiye.org/>

Turkey Down Syndrome Association – Family Support and Education Programs

Since 2009, the Turkey Down Syndrome Association has been a leading non-governmental organization working to improve the quality of life for individuals with Down syndrome and their families through initiatives in health, education, social services, and public awareness. The association is dedicated to supporting the development of individuals with Down syndrome through early and continuous education, helping them secure a meaningful place in society, combating discrimination, and promoting equal opportunities. By establishing branches across different regions of Turkey, the association fosters unity among families and encourages the creation of a strong network of solidarity. In line with these goals, the association continues its efforts with determination to support the development of individuals with Down syndrome, enhance families' knowledge and skills to ensure their active participation in educational processes, strengthen social inclusion by fighting discrimination, and create lasting awareness by transforming society's perception of disability.

Family +1 Program

Family +1 is a series of interactive online sessions that bring together families seeking to increase their knowledge and competencies in various aspects of Down syndrome with expert professionals.

- **Content:** Covers a wide range of topics including physiotherapy, special education, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, nutrition, legal rights, social services, and more.

- **Format:** 90-minute online webinars held 12 times a year. Each webinar requires separate registration and takes place every other Monday from 8:00 PM to 9:30 PM.
- **Participants:** Primarily designed for families with a child who has Down syndrome, but open to anyone interested.

Qualified Parents Program

This program focuses on strengthening the role of parents in the development of individuals with Down syndrome.

- **Purpose:** To provide families with comprehensive and scientific knowledge about Down syndrome and developmental processes, and to enhance parents' skills in creating supportive educational environments.
- **Structure:** Modular training sessions where parents learn practical methods alongside experts and share their experiences.
- **Topics:** Early intervention, home teaching techniques, behavior management, and ways to increase social participation.
- **Format:** Hybrid model combining face-to-face workshops with online support sessions.

Outcomes and Impact

- Increased knowledge and skill levels of families regarding Down syndrome
- Enhanced family participation in educational processes and improved ability to create supportive home environments
- Empowerment of families in fighting discrimination and increased capacity for rights-based advocacy
- Visible change in social awareness and widespread adoption of inclusive approaches

Strengths

- Scientific, practice-oriented, and modular content
- Hybrid structure combining online and face-to-face sessions, ensuring accessibility nationwide
- Framework that supports active family participation and solidarity
- Continuously evolving and updated programs through national and international collaborations

With the Family +1 and Qualified Parents Programs, the Turkey Down Syndrome Association provides a nationally recognized model supporting the empowerment of individuals with Down syndrome and their families through education. These efforts aim to ensure full social inclusion of individuals with Down syndrome and to strengthen their indispensable place in society, while contributing to transforming societal perceptions of disability.

TÜRKİYE DEĞDER EXAMPLE 1

Raising a Child with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Program/Activity/Method Name: Guidance Website for Families

Implementer/Organization: TODEV – Turkish Foundation for Supporting and Educating Autistic Individuals

Target Audience: Families of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Website: <https://todev.org.tr>

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a lifelong neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by problems in social interaction, sensitivity or indifference to visual, auditory, and other stimuli, and restricted areas of interest. Although the exact cause of ASD is not clearly known, it has been proven to result from a complex interaction of genetic, environmental, and neurological factors. Symptoms of ASD can be observed from the age of 2, although diagnosis can also be made later in life. Even though ASD is a lifelong condition, there are cases where the diagnosis has been removed through education and therapy.

In 1991, parents of autistic children established the Association for Conscious Service with Love for Autism to find solutions to their problems and to make their voices heard. After six years of work under this association, they transformed the organization into a foundation in 1997, with the participation of volunteers, in order to expand and institutionalize their efforts. Thus, TODEV (Turkish Foundation for Supporting and Educating Autistic Individuals) was founded.



Methodological Recommendations for Raising Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder:

1. **Developing Educational Programs:** Designs and implements modern educational programs appropriate for the child's age group to improve academic success.
2. **Support for Social and Emotional Development:** Offers various activities and guidance services to improve children's social skills.
3. **Art and Sports Activities:** Organizes art workshops and sports activities to support physical and creative abilities.
4. **Parental Education and Counseling:** Provides training and guidance to strengthen the role of parents in child development.
5. **Technology and Digital Literacy Education:** Provides digital literacy education to ensure children engage with technology in a healthy and informed manner.

Development Areas of Children with Autism:

1. **Cognitive and Academic Development:** Implements individualized educational programs to support learning processes. These programs focus on attention, memory, problem-solving, and language skills, planned according to the child's pace and needs.
2. **Development of Social and Communication Skills:** Uses special methods and therapies to strengthen children's social interaction and communication abilities. The goal is for children to build healthy relationships and increase independence in daily life.



Supporting Communication Skills

Individual and group therapies are conducted to improve children's communication skills. Special education programs and play-based activities are used to enhance language development.

Steps for Working with a Child with Autism:

- 1. Assessment and Diagnosis:** A comprehensive evaluation is conducted to determine the child's current developmental level, strengths, and areas needing support. This includes psychological tests, observations, and information from the family.
- 2. Creating an Individualized Education Plan (IEP):** Based on the assessment results, a personalized education plan is prepared according to the child's needs and goals.
- 3. Organizing the Learning Environment:** An appropriate, well-structured, and supportive educational environment is prepared to enhance attention and facilitate learning.
- 4. Implementation of Education and Therapy:** Individual and group education sessions are delivered by expert teams. These include language, social skills, motor development, and daily living skills.
- 5. Parental Education and Collaboration:** Ensures active involvement of the family. Parents receive training and learn support techniques to use at home.
- 6. Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation:** The child's progress is regularly monitored, education plans are updated as needed, and progress reports are prepared.



Source: <https://todev.org.tr>

TURKEY DEGDER EXAMPLE 2

ENGELSİZ YAŞAM FOUNDATION – ART AND LIFE SKILLS WORKSHOPS PROGRAM

Program/Activity/Method Name:Art and Life Skills Workshops

Implementing Organization:Engelsiz Yaşam Foundation (EYV)

Target Audience:Individuals with intellectual and/or physical disabilities (children, youth, and adults), their families, and caregivers

Website:<https://www.engelsizyasamvakfi.org.tr/>

Program Description:

The "Art and Life Skills Workshops" program, conducted by the Engelsiz Yaşam Foundation, offers a holistic educational approach aimed at supporting the personal development and active social participation of individuals with special needs. The program includes workshops designed to improve artistic, social, cognitive, and daily living skills. Educational activities are individualized according to the needs of the participants and are implemented both in one-on-one and group settings. Families, educators, and volunteers are actively involved in the program.



Pedagogical Goals:

- Development of social interaction and communication skills
- Artistic expression (painting, ceramics, music, etc.)
- Daily living and self-care skills
- Psychomotor development (fine and gross motor skills)
- Self-confidence and the ability to function within a group

Program Duration:

The program is conducted continuously throughout the year. Participants attend workshops 1 to 3 times per week, with each session lasting approximately 60–90 minutes. Programs are updated periodically.

Recommended Target Groups:

- Individuals with special needs (children, youth, and adults)
- Family members and caregivers
- Special education teachers, social workers
- Volunteer trainers and artists
- Guidance and psychological counseling professionals

Recommended Group Size:

Small groups of 5–10 participants are typically preferred in the art and skill workshops. Individual support sessions are also available. Group structures are flexibly arranged according to the profiles of the participants.

Modules, Content and Brief Descriptions:**1. Art Workshops:**

Activities such as painting, ceramics, marbling (ebru), and music are used to support emotional expression, attention, and fine motor skills.

2. Life Skills Training:

Structured, hands-on educational modules focused on self-care, shopping, time management, and independent living practices.

3. Social Interaction Module

Games, drama, and group activities are used to develop social harmony, cooperation, and communication skills.

4. Family Involvement Program:

Family members actively participate in the educational process and receive guidance on caregiving and supportive communication.

Methods Used:

- Structured group activities
- Modeling and imitation-based teaching
- Interaction-based drama and art therapy
- Observation and individualized feedback

Tools Used:

- Art materials (paints, clay, musical instruments, etc.)
- Visual support materials
- Daily life simulation tools
- Evaluation forms and observation charts for tracking participant progress



Results and Implementation Experiences:

Thanks to the program, many individuals with special needs have shown significant improvements in social adaptation and self-confidence. Their expressive abilities have strengthened through artistic activities, and some have had the opportunity to share their work in exhibitions or performances. The active involvement of families has positively influenced the overall development process. Collaborations with local governments and private institutions have increased the accessibility and reach of the program.

TURKEY DEGDER EXAMPLE 3

Early Diagnosis and Timely Access to Special Education for Children with Special Educational Needs

Training Program/Activity/Method Name: Early Diagnosis and Timely Access to Special Education for Children with Special Educational Needs

Implementing Organization: Special Children Education and Solidarity Association (ÖÇED)

Website: <https://www.oced.org.tr>

Target Audience: Parents and caregivers of children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Description of the Training Program:

ÖÇED advocates for a holistic support model that emphasizes early diagnosis and timely access to appropriate special education during the most critical developmental period of children with autism. In line



with this approach, the association organizes seminars, workshops, and counseling activities to inform, empower, and educate families. It also works to raise autism awareness and improve access to rights and services for families.

Pedagogical Objectives:

- To raise awareness among families about the importance of early diagnosis
- To inform parents about their rights and access to special education services
- To establish peer support networks among parents
- To support the development of children with autism in the home environment
- To provide emotional support to families and enhance parenting skills

Program Duration:

Programs are typically offered in the form of periodic (weekly/monthly) educational sessions and individual counseling. The duration may vary depending on the family's needs.

Suggested Target Groups:

- Families of newly diagnosed children with autism
- Parents seeking information and support regarding autism
- Families who are new to the special education process

Recommended Number of Participants per Group:

The training is delivered through both one-on-one counseling and small group sessions of 8–12 participants.

Modules, Content, and Brief Descriptions:

1. Individual Counseling:

One-on-one expert sessions tailored to the family's specific needs

2. Group Meetings: Safe spaces for parents to share experiences

3. Thematic Workshops:

- Importance of early intervention and special education
- Behavior management
- Creating a supportive home learning environment
- Access to education rights and public support
- Teaching autism-friendly daily living skills



Methods Used:

- Peer support groups
- Learning through case studies
- Practical sessions with expert trainers and psychologists
- Workshops, panels, and seminars

Tools Used:

- ÖÇED's web portal and social media platforms
- Written and visual educational materials
- Expert video content and webinars
- Parent guidebooks

Examples of Educational Materials:

- **"Early Intervention Guide"** – A comprehensive parent manual on early diagnosis and the impact of special education in autism.
- **"Home-Based Educational Activity Cards"** – Task and play cards tailored to daily routines.
- **"Rights and Support Handbook for Families"** – Information on public assistance, diagnostic procedures, and special education institutions.
- **"Daily Life Skills Guide for Autism"** – Practical suggestions for teaching hygiene, eating, dressing, and playing skills.

Results and Implementation Experiences:

Since its establishment, ÖÇED has provided both individual and group-level counseling services to hundreds of families. Based on feedback from parents, the programs are continually improved. Notably, significant developmental progress has been reported in children who receive early diagnoses and support. The association plays an active role in both meeting families' psychosocial needs and advocating for the rights of children with autism.

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