



Toolkit for Teachers Training

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1. The toolkit in a glimpse

1.1. The toolkit

This comprehensive toolkit represents a list of valuable resources, strategies, and practical guidance carefully designed to provide an **essential operational manual for teachers, empowering them to foster conflicts within their classrooms**. By equipping educators with the necessary knowledge and skills, this toolkit aims to facilitate the implementation of effective methods that promote peaceful interactions among students.

This toolkit was developed in the framework of the Arguing at School project, which describes and compares 3 methods for conflict transformation at school, highlighting common assumptions and differences. In this respect, the toolkit is the result of a collaborative effort, building upon the foundation of previous initiatives and learning and training activities. The toolkit represents the result of the work carried out with the contribution of 10 partners, including 4 schools. It was born out of the extensive engagement with partner institutions and external stakeholders who have contributed with their expertise and insights. Moreover, the toolkit reflects the experiences of the teachers and educators trained during Learning Teaching Training Activity carried out within the project. The creation of the toolkit was further supported by the research conducted by the project partners in order to collect information on the importance of non-violent conflict resolution and communication from the perspectives of teachers and other educators. Data was gathered through the dissemination of questionnaires (Google forms) which were later quantitatively analysed. The questionnaire, composed of 21 questions, was filled out by 146 participants from 5 partner countries. The results of the research are presented in the Data Processing Report available [here](#).

By incorporating diverse perspectives and experiences, this toolkit ensures a comprehensive and well-rounded approach to addressing quarrels at school for students from 2 to 18 years old, who need different age-appropriate methods that are clear in their assumptions, actions and outcomes.

The three methods presented in this toolkit and employed throughout the Arguing at School project, already consolidated by some of the partners are: the **Litigare bene method** by Daniele Novara; the **Friendship Cards** by Relationships are Forever Foundation - Malta; **Peer Mediation**; in addition to other methods that are deemed as useful and effective.

1.2 Rationale and objectives of the toolkit

Often conflicts between students are interpreted as a transgression to be handled through school regulations, using sanctions or detentions that do not give students the opportunity to develop their life skills. The rationale behind the toolkit and the project is that if conflicts between peers are properly addressed, children can learn about emotions and nonviolent communication and can therefore discover their ability to find a clarification, a solution, an agreement or a new possibility. In order

for this to happen, teachers need to be able to use tools and to organise learning opportunities. In this respect, the toolkit has the following objectives:

1. To equip teachers and educators with skills to address conflicts between students;
2. To equip teachers and educators with strategies and techniques to address conflict between students that can be easily implemented in their classroom. The toolkit offers many resources in accordance to the age of the students, the school's choices about arguing at school and to the teacher who is applying them;
3. To empower students to develop their own conflict resolution skills and promote a positive and inclusive learning environment.

It is important to bear in mind that introducing methods and strategies to deal with conflict in class may take time (an example may be a two-year project on the introduction of Peer Mediation that is taking place in different schools in Italy and Croatia). However, these tools may represent a first step implementable by teachers and possibly by groups of teachers that can better deal with students in conflicting situations. This toolkit also represents a first to the implementation of the “Whole School Approach”. In this educational approach, adopted by many schools in European countries, teachers are trained to deal with conflicts between students and in this way, create harmonious relationships not only within the class, but also between themselves and learners. This toolkit represents a way for teachers that perhaps do not already apply a method or are not part of a Whole School Approach process to support them in addressing children's quarrelling.

1.3 The benefits of the tools

1.3.1 For the teachers

The toolkit contains tools that foster teachers' observational skills, dialogue, empathy, active listening, and respectful communication which allows them to create a culture of understanding and collaboration within the classroom. By utilising them, teachers can guide students towards peaceful problem-solving, empathy building, and constructive expression of emotions.

By offering a summary of knowledge and skills, transferable methods, tools for students, and evidence-based outcomes, it equips teachers with the necessary tools to create an inclusive classroom environment that fosters positive relationships and effective life skills.

1.3.2 For the students

The teacher's role is not so much to impart knowledge and to make use of their conflict skills, but to organise the students' experience in ways such that quarrels

find a less unpredictable and safer space and time in which mutual trust between students and between teachers and students can grow.

Students will gain control over quarrels and they will exercise the task to talk to each other, with the help of a peer mediator if this is possible. They have the chance to be independent and learn in a healthy and nonviolent environment. By showcasing the positive impact of methods in real educational settings, this toolkit encourages teachers to embrace these practices with confidence, knowing that they can make a significant difference in the lives of their students.

Let us embark on this journey together towards building a more competent and empathetic educational community.

2. Literature review: a mapping of activities on non-violent communication

As part of the project, a mapping of activities of non-violent communication and conflict transformation implemented in Croatia, Malta, Italy, Romania and France (NGOs, the education system, different organisations etc.) was conducted. As a result, a total of **64 activities** were mapped.

The activities mapped are addressed to children and young adults, between 2 and 18 years old. Therefore, some activities are aimed at kindergarten children, while others are aimed at primary and high school students. The main themes of these activities are mediation; art therapy; self-awareness; emotional literacy; sensibilization, social responsibility, and, of course, peaceful conflict resolution through activities that include: role plays, workshops, theatre, film making, direct confrontation of peers in conflict etc. The aforementioned workshops and programs cover various educational outcomes, which aim to improve students' communication skills, critical thinking skills, creativeness, and relationships with their peers, and overall expand their knowledge on conflict resolution and the consequences of violence. The following table gives an overview of the results of the mapping.

CROATIA

- Mediation in school - <https://www.centar-za-mir.hr/>
- Non-violent communication - <https://babe.hr/>
- Peace is my dream - <https://dokkica.hr/>
- A play "Be Like Us"- <https://dokkica.hr/>
- Mediation - <https://fso.hr/>
- Nonviolent communication and conflict transformation - <https://www.rand.hr/>
- Different strokes for different folks - <https://savez-dnd.hr/>
- Someone <https://cnzd.org/>
- Social skills training - <http://www.udrugaduga.hr/>



- NON-violence - <https://www.ypgd.org/index.php/hr/>
- Peer violence - STOP violence? - <http://www.izvor-ljubavi.hr/>
- Man, don't be mad - live! <http://www.novi-svijet.hr/index.php>
- Create with your hands, don't hit! <https://carpediem.hr/>
- No bullying <https://www.tesa.hr/>
- School volunteer community - force for sustainable development <https://medijacija.hr/>
- I'm walking in your shoes <https://sos-dsh.hr/>
- Socio-emotional learning <https://centarsreca.hr/>
- Non-violent conflict resolution <http://os-igkovacic-vrbovsko.skole.hr/skola/projekti>
- Basic mediation seminar <https://fso.hr/forum-for-freedom-in-education/>
- Advanced mediation program <https://fso.hr/forum-for-freedom-in-education/>
- Additional mediator training <https://medijacija.hr/>
- Mediation Training <https://medijacija.hr/>
- Teen CAP <https://urkpk.org/?s=teen+cap&lang=hr>
- CAP <https://urkpk.org/programi/cap-program/opcenito-o-cap-u/>
- Life skills training <https://zzjzpgz.hr/zavod/odjeli/odjel-za-prevenciju-i-lijecenje-bolesti-ovisnosti/odsjek-za-promicanje-i-zastitu-mentalnog-zdravlja/>
- Litigare bene method <http://os-igkovacic-vrbovsko.skole.hr/skola/projekti>

MALTA

- Friendship Cards <https://www.friendshipcards.org/>
- Journeying Together
- Theatre face to face
- Motivate, encourage and empower
- The story collection
- Photocean play
- Plastocean play

ROMANIA

- Encouraging positive behavior by providing effective feedback <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100072500197434>
<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=852897809054220&set=pcb.852897955720872>
- Responsibility and effective communication in conflict resolution" <https://educatiafnonf.wordpress.com/category/proiect-grundtvig/>
https://issuu.com/tatianavintur/docs/respect_isjv_20
- Managing the main emotional school problems: bullying, disinterest, failure, stress, isolation <https://academiaclar.ro/programul-scoli-constiente/>
- Application of conflict negotiation and conflict mediation techniques <https://educatiafnonf.wordpress.com/category/respect-proiect/>
- Global Education Week <https://2marginea.ro/categorie/proiecte-educationale/page/4/>
- Totem Method <https://www.facebook.com/metodatotem/>
- Forum Theatre
Dawson, E., & Kiger Lee, J. (2014). Drama Based Pedagogy: Activating Learning Across the Curriculum. Multilingual Matters.



Dawson, E., & Kiger Lee, J. (2014). Drama Based Pedagogy: Activating Learning Across the Curriculum. Multilingual Matters.

Boal, A. (1993). Theatre of the Oppressed. Theatre Communications Group.

Schutzman, M. (2005). Forum Theatre in Practice: Bridging the Gap between Theatre and Social Action. Pluto Press.

Schutzman, M., & Cohen-Cruz, J. (1994). Playing Boal: Theatre, therapy, activism. Routledge.

Mady, C., Lapierre, S., & Schouela, S. (2010). The Use of Forum Theatre to Promote Dialogue and Learning about Diversity Issues in Higher Education. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, 3(4), 221-231.

Salmon, J. (2010). Forum Theatre: A Method for Addressing Social Issues in the Classroom. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 46(2), 259-273.

Boal, A. (1985). Theatre of the Oppressed, New York: Theatre Communications Group.

Boal, A. (1974). Theater of the Oppressed, London: Pluto Press.

- **Mmogo** Method
Manasia, L, & Ianos, G. (2019). Co-Creation Pedagogy: Ideas for Learning Activities and Tools.
Roos, V. (2020). Understanding Relational and Group Experiences through the Mmogo-Method®. *Journal of Sociology and Social Work*, 8(1), 13-28.
Roos, V. (2013). Mmogo-method: Innovative qualitative data gathering tool. LAMBERT Academic Publishing.
Manasia, L et. al. (2021). Visual narratives - a co-creative approach to teacher training for online learning environments. In L. Gómez Chova, A. López Martínez, I. Candel Torres (Eds.), EDULEARN21 Proceedings: 13th International Conference on Education and New Learning Technologies (pp. 6029-6038). IATED Academy.
Roos, V. (2019). Mmogo-method: A Photovoice Approach to Exploring the Experiences of Female Migrants in South Africa. Springer.
- **Graffiti** Wall
Lee, J. J., Kim, M., & Kim, Y. J. (2017). A Study on the Effectiveness of Graffiti Wall as a Learning Activity in Science Class. *Journal of the Korean Association for Science Education*, 37(6), 1063-1075.
MacQueen, S. (2013). Graffiti Walls: Giving students a voice. *Journal of Cultural Research in Art Education*, 30, 1-16.
Ortega, L. (2015). Using graffiti as a medium to promote writing in an urban elementary classroom. *Journal of Urban Learning, Teaching, and Research*, 11, 45-51.
Stewart, D., & Williams, A. (2018). Using graffiti to promote student voice, identity and community in a rural Australian school. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 39(1), 124-138.
Yankelov, S., & Zlatev, M. (2019). Graffiti in the classroom: Educators' perspectives on its potential for academic and social learning. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 20(13), 1-27.
- **Lego Serious Play**
"Serious Play: A Guide to Making a Difference with LEGO®" by Sean Blair, Marko Rillo, and David Gauntlett (Wiley, 2019)
- **Transcend Method**
The Transcend Method: A Comprehensive Guide to Conflict Resolution by William Ury and Donald Krause.
Conflict Resolution Education: The Field, the Findings, and the Future by Richard J. Bodine and Donna K. Crawford.
Peace Education: How We Come to Love and Hate War by Nel Noddings.
Transforming Conflict in Schools: Creating Compassionate Learning Communities by Michelle E. Martin.
The Handbook of Conflict Resolution Education: A Guide to Building Quality Programs in Schools edited by Richard J. Bodine and Elizabeth A. Long.

- Emotijovia
Panisoara, I. O. (2017). Provocarea Emotiilor: Editia a II-a (The Challenge of Emotions: 2nd edition). Editura ASCR.
Panisoara, I. O. (2019). Emotijovia: Carti Pentru Jocuri si Exerciții de Educație Emțională (Emotijovia: Cards for Emotional Education Games and Exercises). Editura ASCR.
Vasilescu, I., & Vasilescu, L. (2019). Emotional education using the card game Emotijovia. In C. M. Popescu & A. T. Balog (Eds.), Learning and education in the digital age (pp. 175-184). Springer.

FRANCE

- Training in conflict management and mediation <https://www.asso-grainedecitoyen.fr>
<https://www.asso-grainedecitoyen.fr/wp-gdcontent/uploads/2015/11/pdf-pour-internet-1.pdf>
- Pole Formation <http://education-nvp.org/ressources/le-programme/>
- "1) Accompagner le Vivre Ensemble pour agir sur le Climat scolaire (et extra-scolaire), en vue de la réussite de tous. 2) Médiation par les pairs" <https://gemediat.org>
- Génération Médiateurs <https://gemediat.org/>
- L'apprentissage du conflit | Coordination pour l'éducation à la non-violence et à la paix https://education-nvp.org/fiches_pedagogiques/lapprentissage-du-conflit/

ITALY

- Litigare bene method by Daniele Novara <https://www.metododanielenovara.it/metodo-litigare-bene/>
- Interactive exhibition "Conflicts, quarrels and other hassles" (in Italian Mostra interattiva Conflitti, litigi e altre rotture - Mostra interattiva per ragazzi) <https://www.metododanielenovara.it/mostra-conflitti-litigi-e-altre-rotture/>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bKuv_f6RGuM
- Module 7 in Part 1 of the IO2 of the project PRACTICE Preventing Radicalism through Critical Thinking Competences titled Program for the Prevention of Radicalization <https://practice-school.eu/the-project/>
- School of Peace of Monte Sole <https://www.montesole.org/>
- Training course for teachers "Effective communication, conflict management and active listening techniques" <https://www.eurosofia.it/lista-corsi/corso.html?id=1320>
- YouTopic Fest, the festival of conflict by Rondine <https://rondine.org/youtopic-fest-2022-al-via-il-festival-del-conflitto-di-rondine/>
- Awareness process for conflict mediation at school by Cooperativa Dike http://www.cooperativadike.org/pagina_scuola.pdf
- "Paper ""The dialogic management of conflict analysis of an experimentation with children and pre-teens"" <https://sociale.regione.emilia-romagna.it/documentazione/publicazioni/guide/i-quaderni-di-camina>
- Le Carte dei conflitti <http://www.lecartedeiconflitti.org/>
- Cooperative Council <https://www.lameridiana.it/il-consiglio-di-cooperazione.html>;
<https://www.lameridiana.it/come-pesci-in-un-acquario.html>.
- Maieutic Debate or Socratic Debate



<https://www.metododanielenovara.it/approfondimento/elogia-del-disaccordo/>

- ASVIS Global Goal Kidis Show Italia goal 16 - Global Goals Kids Show Italia - Puntata #SDG16 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1clrr10vXw8>

Table 1 *Activities mapped by the partner countries*

3. Theoretical background: teachers dealing with students arguing

“*Arguing at school*” refers to the experience common to all teachers: handling students quarrel. Arguing happens when children are playing, for example when they want the same toy or the same role in a game, leading to competitiveness and sometimes resulting in an argument or a quarrel. Name calling, mocking, and expressing emotions such as anger or frustration are common examples of quarrels between children.

Usually, teachers view quarrels as a hassle for the lessons or their role in the school, for many different reasons. Traditionally, students learn from the adults in their lives that arguing is wrong and unnecessary. However, this approach is stressful and not effective. In this respect, the Arguing at School project adopts the idea that arguing is a natural part of interacting with friends or living with siblings, and how it doesn’t equal violence. These behaviours have always happened throughout history, and continue everywhere today. Accordingly, arguing is a physiological and significant moment in relationships, allowing children to get out of their infantile self-centeredness and try to understand that others are different, have their point of view, their emotions, and their own will, and deserve to be taken into consideration, but also continuing to be together and play, learn, live.

In this respect, the Arguing at School project shares the idea that quarrelling is a learning opportunity and considers conflict at schools as an opportunity for students, teachers, and parents to learn skills, using different methods for students of different ages. Instead, what was very common in the past may have influenced adults’ pedagogical approaches, as they might have grown up with a different understanding of children’s quarrels, that were considered mistakes to avoid or punish. The old concept of arguing among children labelled them as “bad children”, an issue deeply rooted in cultural tradition.

What changes according to different times and different cultures is the reaction of adults to children's quarrels. Some reactions are educational and can help in the development of learning and skills to increase inclusion, mutual trust in the group, and interpersonal skills. Other reactions may be influenced by educational practices aimed at obedience. An example of that is the *Black pedagogy, or Prussian education*¹ aimed at preparing people for war.

¹ Alice Miller explains this tradition and calls it “Black Pedagogy”, which had a very strong and violent concept of the role of adults against “bad children”, quarrelling ones included. They looked at children’s quarrels as an example of evil. Giving an example, the old book for children that sold millions of copies in all EU and extra EU, Russia and China included, from 1848 until now, a famous example of Black Pedagogy. It was a strong “poison” for children who ended up making many wars, including IWW and IIWW. It is now free of charge in English on the Internet. “The Story of the Inky Boys” is a story of a stopped quarrel between children, because the violent intervention of the adult is so fast, giving punishment to the children culprit of “calling names”, that they cannot have a minute to understand what was happening. The situation of “calling names” may happen and become a quarrel, an interaction between children. It is not rare. For children living 180

When teachers and schools focus their attention specifically on how to handle students' quarrels from a modern pedagogical perspective, they can adopt a Whole School Approach, which is manageable and very practical.

An important issue that the Arguing at School project and this toolkit want to stress is the difference between conflict and war. In this regard, conceptualising quarrels is not enough. It is essential to acknowledge **that quarrels are a form of conflict and conflicts are not wars**. Understanding the difference between conflict and war is very important because our methods address conflict situations, such as quarrels, not crimes or violent situations, where a victim suffers from violent action. If that is the situation, if the case is violence, harassment, or bullying, they need to stop it and make it clear that violence is not acceptable, and take care of the victim, as well as the whole class and school.

The following chapters will offer an overview of Arguing at School's 3 methods highlighting how employing these methods is inherently different from the ordinary experience at school, without a pedagogical method. All the methods proposed by the Arguing at School project aim for students' inclusion and the development of life skills in alignment with the EU values. Schools work towards inclusiveness and democratic citizenship education through various means and methods. The concept of "arguing at school" allows schools to achieve this by considering children's quarrels as opportunities for learning valuable social skills. The [Project website](#) contains several pieces [of evidence](#) about different methods, implemented in kindergartens, primary and secondary schools, which are working and are transferable to new schools. Some starting points of these methods are asking teachers (and parents) about their reactions to children quarrelling opens a pedagogical query. Some of these questions are:

- *What are teachers' reactions to peers' quarrels?*
- *Is this a reaction or a choice?*
- *If it is a reaction, is it coming from the individuality of the teacher, coming from autobiography, and from "cultural inertia"?*
- *If it is a choice, what is this choice? What pedagogical background and learning objective are there?*

years ago in Prussia was rare to see a child with black skin. You can read it here in the context of the terrible children's book *Struwwelpeter, Merry Tales and Funny Pictures*, by Heinrich Hoffman, published in 1844 in German, translated in English in 1848: <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/12116/12116-h/12116-h.htm>. Here the "teacher", a sort of "Santa Klaus", "foams with rage". He doesn't seem literate on emotions at all. He is very violent, which means he is teaching to be violent, too. He is accusing "quarrelling" children to be "culprits" of evil (racism), but he is teaching violence at that very moment, with a punishment so fast that they have no time for quarrelling either. It is still not rare to find this brutal book in the autobiographical memories of adults. There are fearful memories if the child who read the book was then under 9 years old.

4. Method 1: Litigare Bene

In a glimpse, the Litigare bene method by Daniele Novara is based on 4 main principles:

1. Don't look for the culprit;
2. Do not offer solutions to the situation;
3. Encourage children to talk;
4. Foster a deal, but not necessarily.

The sentences that the teacher uses in encouraging conversations with students are:

1. What happened?
2. How do you feel?
3. What can you do for each other (restitution)?

In the following paragraphs, some of the tools of the Litigare Bene method will be described.

4.1 The Conflict Diary tool

“The Conflict Diary is a training and self-education tool for adults to foster and exploit the characteristics of adult learning: it requires a motivation to learn, generates a subjective and sustainable pathway, stimulates an experiential approach to conflicts, and produces novel and often surprising reinterpretations by unhinging established securities and processes.” (Daniele Novara, *La grammatica dei conflitti*)

The *Conflict Diary* is a tool for teachers' pedagogical work. It is an adult learning tool, offered in an adapted version to make the *Arguing at School* methods more transferable. It is an individual, free, and confidential writing activity.

It uses the practice of writing to activate awareness and reflection on one's way of being in conflict. The reactions that happen in tense situations are written down, so it is possible to read them. This tool makes it possible to read one's own and others' behaviours and to read it again after some time. It is used to work on adults' *conflict skills*.

It can be useful for teachers that are approaching the implementation of a method for conflict transformation.

The individual work on the Diary and subsequent reworking, done individually and/or in groups, always respecting confidentiality and individual sustainability, helps adults to focus on the issue of quarrels and accompanies the decision to introduce a new method for students. The teacher's commitment to observing quarrels, to reading them rather than trying to interfere, is functional to the task of

writing the *Conflict Diary* and greatly helps to enhance the teacher's role as an *observer*, which is very important in the educational relationship, beyond the issue of quarrels.

One of the main obstacles to the implementation of the method of arguing at school is the widespread, even unaware, role of the teacher-judge, who assesses the faults of the disputants and imposes solutions and punishments. It is clear that the *Conflict Diary* tool, which allows one to notice this and other phenomena, is necessary to build educational cohesion among adults.

Here are the proposed questions for completing the Conflict Diary with the individual and confidential work.

1. *How much do student quarrels weigh on you? Which quarrels weigh most heavily on you?*
2. *I retrieve and write down a quarrel between my pupil(s). What happened? How did I feel? What did I do?*
3. *Re-reading the episode written earlier, I ask myself: Was it conflict or was it violence? Was it an argument or was it an episode of violence, with a victim of intentionally harmful behaviour?*
4. *What phrases do adults say when a quarrel breaks out between children/students? I write examples of sentences told by me or told by people around me....*
5. *What phrases were said to me when I was a child and there was a quarrel between children?*
6. *Write down a hot conflict you are currently involved in. What did I say/do? What did I try to say/do? What would I have liked?*

What is written in the Diary is and remains confidential. This rule ensures adequate and functional introspective space for the self-training work.. Moreover, the *Conflict Diary* can be used to keep track of at least three conflicts, for a maximum of eight. These may be conflicts that you experience yourself over the next month, or conflicts of others that you witness. You will be able to keep track of them by writing as you wish.

This way of using the *Conflict Diary* has been very useful in the context of the Erasmus KA1 mobility project that involved three of ten partners of the Arguing at School KA2 project. It funded two main mobility actions: Job shadowing of two groups of Croatian teachers from the Ivan Goran Kovačić school in Vrbovsko to the INTRO's Montessori Casa dei Bambini "Il Sassolino" in Gavardo, Brescia, and teachers training on the Litigare Bene method by the CPP (online in November 2021 and at Vrbovsko on May 2022). The Diary was a part of the online Teachers Training, aimed at teachers who were preparing to expand the use of the Litigare Bene Method, which started in 2018, after the EduCATE's LTTA).

The input questions have their focus on student quarrels, not on the conflicts involving teachers. By May 2023, for the in-person meeting in Croatia with the CPP, many teachers had written their Diaries. After an initial discussion, the work continued with the school's pedagogue Tanja Jakovac and it is in the following chapter.

In countries where there is an office of the pedagogue or counsellor inside the school, it will be easier to use the Diary for working on cultural awareness about arguing at school issues.

4.1.1 Children can argue well: The Analysis of the "Conflict Diaries"

During the CPP's teachers training about the Litigare bene method by Daniele Novara, done during 2021/22 ([Erasmus KA1 Project](#)), the name of the "CONFLICT CORNERS" caused many controversies and almost all teachers had the urge to talk about it. The belief that existed was "Conflict is not good and it should be avoided" or "Conflict is violence...". This was a very interesting piece of information to us and we discussed it a lot. It was necessary to do and get acquainted with our beliefs and the overall philosophy of a conflict. Teachers were allowed to call the corners what they wanted. It is noticed that most of them chose "Reconciliation corners" which is an indication that it is still necessary to work on changing teachers' beliefs.

After the training, teachers kept a diary of conflict observations. In the realisation and introduction of "Peace corners or conflict corners" 12 primary teachers and 4 subject teachers participated in the process of primary education (ICT, English, Religious education, and a Serbian national minority teacher). In total, they recorded 42 conflicts during the year in 12 class departments with a total of 52 pupils.

Conflicts were related to everyday situations such as: who will be first at lunch; throwing a ball at other students in PE class; during the break at the urging of a student; one student hitting another one; making fun of the works of other students, student takes things from another student without asking; student kissing other students in class without their consent.

The situations that were solved are:

1. Who will be the first;
2. Who is better;
3. Derision;
4. Persuasion;
5. Possession.

All these situations are a part of the student's growth and educational process, but it is always a question of how teachers handle these situations with them. How to give them information about the correct resolution of the above? Until now, we

have always sought the culprit in a conflict and punished them by using various habits of criticism, bribery, blaming and finally imposing pedagogical measures.

By introducing the philosophy “How to argue well” and the “Litigare bene method”, teachers were encouraged to change their beliefs related to a conflict and its resolution among students. Table 2 provides further insight into how this particular method affected the previous traditional beliefs of educators.

Through the process of observing conflict resolution, teachers emphasise a fundamental change in their attitudes and beliefs.

- *The teacher says:* “It was difficult not to get involved in the conflict and wait for them to come up with a solution. It was even harder for me when they didn’t come up with a solution..., “It encouraged me to see that they continued playing and that the reason for a conflict no longer mattered to them....” “I asked myself, “Where am I in this situation? And she gave herself the answer: “ Where I need to be ... AN OBSERVER”

This kind of changing of beliefs empowers both the teacher and the children. Children handle their situations and are allowed to do so. They are taught to make decisions, and express feelings, but they are also taught responsibility. The teacher puts themselves in the role of an observer and has no control over the students’ decisions in resolving conflicts.

- *The teacher says:* “I have always given advice and I thought that my life experience was the most important and that I had the right to offer solutions to conflicts with children. After observing children’s conflicts and their successful resolution (which is not in line with what I would offer them), I realised that by offering students solutions, I only complicate things because they remain in conflict. I realised that by interfering in children’s conflicts, conflicts last much longer.”

- *The teacher says:* “I often solved situations in children’s conflicts through punishment and control. For example: When the kids were arguing about who would be the monitor, I chose the solution that there would be no one or another week for both of them or I sought the help of their parents. I wasn’t happy with the solution, but I didn’t know otherwise. It is much easier for me now because the students who come into stated situations resolve their conflicts. I’m very happy to participate in/not participate in it.



SUBJECT	Traditional belief	Belief after teacher's training (KA1 project)	Belief after creating conflict corners (Litigare bene method)
Conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Conflict is bad ➤ Blaming (victim) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Conflict is an inevitable part of our everyday life ➤ No guilty part in the conflict 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ An opportunity to learn ➤ Everybody has right to express their side of story
Conflict resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Conflict cannot be resolved without intervention of an adult 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students can resolve their conflicts by themselves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students resolve their conflicts in the conflict corners very successfully.
The role of the teacher in conflict resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The teacher should resolve the student's conflict 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I observe how students resolved their conflicts ➤ I guide them with questions through conflict resolution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students go to the conflict corners to resolve their conflicts independently
Feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ It is not important to express the feelings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>A boy must not cry</i> ○ <i>It is not good to be angry</i> ○ <i>Do not be sad; it is nothing</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ It is important to show feelings ➤ It is important to recognize other people's feelings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students talk about their feelings in the conflict and listen to how others feel.
Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Control over children during conflicts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I need to be an observer and manager in children's quarrel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I observe a conflict between students; I feel relief

4.2 The 4 steps

<p>Two steps back (Adults do it!) When children quarrel:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do not look for a culprit 2. Do not impose a solution
<p>Two steps forward (for teachers)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Get the quarrelers to talk to each other 4. Foster mutual agreement, if children do it

A teacher can start making the first and second step back anytime, on the first occasion of children quarrelling. It may be a single teacher's decision. If the children are aged 2-3, there is no need to do more than that: to stop ineffective interventions by adults. Younger children can interact and find a "solution" or a new way of playing in one or a few minutes if the time is given to them. Teachers who have done it have also documented it with videos. For example, a four-minute video shows a group of five toddlers with a basket full of books. Two of them want to have the same book and quarrel about it. They cannot talk. They interact for some time and some third child interacts with them, too. The teacher is there, calm, she is not worried, and takes the video. After a while, one child puts the book back into the basket, and the other takes it. The only intervention of the teachers is to film them quarrelling, it could have been just being there, calm. This and other videos have been shared during Arguing at school events and CPP events: so people can see what happens if there is no adult intrusion into the quarrel. Children can do it, they learn to self-regulate by arguing. The Conflict Diary helps in the observation and the awareness about these hundreds of chances for learning to interact through interactions, learning by doing.

In Pre-primary schools the two steps forward are welcome, it is possible to introduce the ritual of the Conflict Corners, in an easy version: children sit there and talk to each other. In primary school, more details and objects may help the ritual.

The 4 steps also serve to build pedagogical cohesiveness among adults. The first step for applying the whole Litigare bene method, with all 4 steps, is to make the decision to use it. If the decision is shared by the teachers involved, the children will learn very soon to use it, inside or outside the class, and if possible it will even make its way into the family. All the adults involved have some information about it, including non-teaching staff.

It is important to inform the parents, organising meetings with them about quarrels and the importance of learning to express emotions, to listen to others, and to talk and express feelings, points of view, and requests. The habit of misunderstanding quarrels as they were a matter of justice is very common, so it is important to work

to build a common language and a pedagogical awareness about the importance of quarrels for the growth of children and for the health of their social skills.

4.3 The 4 steps and the Conflict Corner

When some teachers take two steps back, it is time to build a **Conflict corner**, the ritual space where children can go to talk to each other, taking their time to continue the quarrel in a *safe place*, where there is no fear of violence and no risk of being punished.

There are many differences among Conflict Corners, built for different ages pupils with their involvement and collaboration. There are several decisions to make about the Conflict Corner. The teacher starts with a proposal and an example, to show how it works. According to the age of the children, it is important to involve them in the decision-making process and in the preparation of the space.

A list of questions may help the process:

- **Where is a good place to make a Conflict Corner?** Inside the classroom? In the corridor? In the garden? Some spaces are not calm enough. It has to be visible, it is not a hidden place. Teachers and other children know that the Conflict Corner is used for that purpose, it is not used for other reasons. It is a dedicated and permanent space, prepared involving the class.



Figure 1 A very basic Conflict Corner, only two chairs and a ball of wool

- **How to make it?** With two chairs only? With a small table, too? It is useful, so the children can write. A bench is also a choice in several schools, with no chairs and no table. A box is useful for keeping things, like a Conflict Corner Kit.



Figure 2 This Conflict Corner has a box, papers, colored pencils, and a Flipchart with the name of it: “Angolo del pennarello rosso sottile”, which means: “corner of the thin red marker”

- **What is the name of our Conflict Corners?** The class may decide to give it a different name, like “Corner of the word” or “bickering corner”.



Figure 3 “The Corner of peace”, very simple: two chairs and the ball of wool

- **What is our ritual object for talking?**

Talking to each other is the main purpose of the Conflict Corner. The rule is that whoever has the ritual object speaks, and then gives it to the other and listens to them. A ball of wool is the main suggestion. There are Conflict Corners with different symbolic objects.



Figure 4 A Conflict Corner with the ball of wool for take the turn of talking to each other and a mirror

4.3.1 Emotions

Sitting in the Conflict Corner children express their emotions and listen to the other. Pictures or photos of **faces** expressing **basic emotions** like sadness, joy, anger, and fear. The class can add disgust and surprise. Here are some examples, with emotions on the table or on the wall. A box for keeping the picture helps.



Figure 5 Example of a flipchart with basic emotions, with emoji



Figure 6 A basic Conflict Corner, with photos of emotions and drawn quarrels

4.3.2 Get the quarrelers to talk to each other

For younger children, sitting in the Corner and looking at each other may be sufficient. This may not be the case with older children, primary school pupils: can express their side of the story by writing it and exchanging their versions of the situations.



Figure 7 A Conflict Corner in Primary School. Students have written their version of the situation and they exchange their papers. The white paper with the title “My version” is a part of the Conflict Corner

Kit, with the Ball of Wool, the chairs and table, the basket with papers and pens, and the pictures of emotions.

4.3.3 Foster mutual agreement

Primary school pupils who are able to write and manage the Conflict Corner sometimes need to see that their agreement is recognized by their partner and the teachers. For this purpose, it is possible to use a special rituality that makes visible the last step of the method. A simple white paper with the title “Our Agreements” can be a part of the Conflict Corner Kit. A clothes peg with written “Our Agreements” may be included in the Kit.

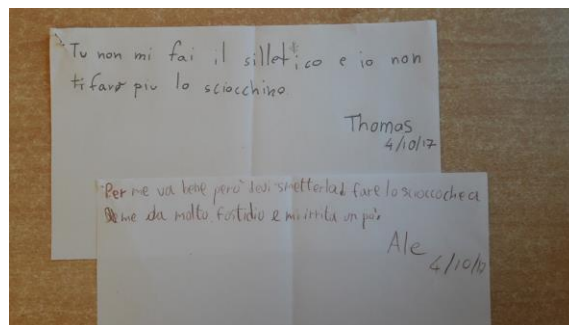


Figure 8 Example of agreement:

“You don't tickle me anymore and I'll stop being silly. Thomas 2017”

“That's fine with me, but you really need to stop being silly. Alexander 2017”

4.3.4 Collecting Agreements

A class can decide to use a proper Notebook of Agreements, like the one pictured in Figure 9, included in the box kit for the Conflict corner, with an original “object of the word”, a tomato!



Figure 9 Example of a box kit used in the Conflict Corner

4.3.5 Litigare bene rules for secondary school students

The pilot schools of the Arguing at School consortium are experienced with the Litigare bene method in preschool and primary school. In secondary school, they can continue to negotiate and talk to each other in the case of a quarrel.

The four rules addressed to the teachers are formulated in a different way, in the first person. Students may become able to negotiate without rituals. They may have learned the essential rules that are:

Litigare bene rules for secondary school students:
(I won't insult you, I won't hit you. This is a safe space for negotiation)
1. It's not my fault, it's not your fault
2. I don't command, you don't command
3. I speak you listen, I listen you speak
4. Have we cleared up?

5. Method 2: Friendship cards

5.1 Introduction

The development of Friendship Cards (FC) was informed by literature, which indicates that tools in the form of games and cards can be an excellent way of introducing and teaching social emotional learning skills to children and adolescents. These skills help children and adolescents become more emotionally literate individuals. Emotional literacy plays a significant role in conflict resolution since it fosters empathy, promotes self-awareness and thus enhances effective communication, facilitating constructive problem solving solutions. When people accurately express their emotions and needs without becoming defensive and aggressive, they encourage open and constructive dialogue, enabling them to find common ground and work towards a resolution.

This tool is made up of a set of cards which help children and adolescents embark on a journey of self-discovery and better understanding of themselves. The cards are divided into 5 sections – Feelings, Bad Move, Good Move, Making Up and the Feeling Section once again (Figures 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14). The tool starts by presenting a series of cards showing different 'Feelings', followed by 'Good Move' cards (cards that show positive ways to solve a conflict) and 'Bad Move' cards (cards that show negative ways to solve a conflict). The 'Making Up' cards help the children and adolescents to reflect on ways of how to resolve the conflict. The final step of cards helps children and adolescents understand how the 'Feelings' might have changed after this process of discussion, reflection and exploration.



Figure 10 *The 5 sections of Friendship Cards*

This tool can be used by parents, educators and other professionals. The cards are generally used with case studies, storytelling or short video clips on a topic chosen, according to the needs of the children or adolescents.

5.2 Feelings

There are 12 Feelings cards in the FC. These can be used at any stage of the process. At the front of each card, there is a visual depicting the emotion, while at the back there are questions that can assist whoever is using the cards to reflect deeper on what they are feeling in the circumstances. The blank card is important because it allows participants to add their own feelings, in order to enhance emotional vocabulary and increase awareness of their inner feelings. The Feelings cards provide a safe medium for participants to communicate their needs and concerns, providing an opportunity for empathy, understanding and problem-solving. The Feeling cards also allow participants to express their feelings in a suitable manner, validate their feelings and thus reduce the likelihood of emotional buildup and/or unhealthy coping mechanisms. The feelings phase is possibly one of the most delicate but important phases of the process, therefore a safe place and space has to be created.

Sometimes children and adolescents do not have the emotional vocabulary to express their feelings, the Feelings cards provide a visual and tangible aid in exploring and understanding the complex world of emotions.



Figure 11 Friendship cards

5.3 Bad Moves

In a conflict there are certain behaviours or moves that can escalate the argument, hinder resolution efforts and negatively affect the relationship. In the FC these are called the Bad Moves. The Bad Moves cards make the participants aware that the escalation of the conflict - (shouting, name-calling or using aggressive body language), bringing up past grievances, refusing to engage or making the argument bigger - perpetuates negativity, creates further divisions and impedes the development of constructive solutions. The presence of a blank card allows participants to come up with other behaviours that they think impedes the effective resolution of conflicts.



Figure 12 Friendship cards of Bad Moves

5.4 Good Moves

Conflicts are a normal and unavoidable part of interactions between individuals and can promote children's and adolescents' social and psychological growth. In disputes or disagreements, certain behaviours can contribute to resolving issues and maintaining healthy relationships. In the FC these are represented by the

Good Moves cards which emphasise the need for self reflection and time out, open and respectful communication, active listening, empathy and understanding, finding common ground and finding a solution together. These cards help participants acknowledge that these moves foster understanding, promote collaboration and contribute to the resolution of conflicts in a constructive and respectful manner.



Figure 13 Friendship cards of Good Moves

5.5 Making Up

Each conflict and relationship is different. Therefore, participants can use the Making Up cards to repair and strengthen their relationship. They can choose one or more cards or include their own solution using the blank card. This not only empowers the participants but they would own the solution and the makeup process. The final stage of the cards allows participants to:

- Feel comfortable acknowledging their feelings, talking to each other and finding out what caused the disagreement;
- Realize that they may have said or done something wrong;
- Focus on taking positive steps and avoiding hurtful behavior.



Figure 14 Making up cards

6. Method 3: Peer Mediation

The Forum for Freedom of Education Zagreb www.fso.hr, developed the method of Peer Mediation while the Center for Peace, Nonviolence and Human Rights was trained to implement it in 2009, and since then the CPO has been regularly implementing it. The program consists of five full days of training, setting up of a mediation club within a school, promotion of peer mediation in the school and local community, supervision of work of the mediation club and two years of support for teachers and children mediators.

The CPO education philosophy and methodology was influenced by Adam Curle (Quaker Community mediation) and Nonviolent Communication by Marshall Rosenberg. Despite the fact that the method has been implemented for more than ten years, it is still met with resistance from those who believe that conflicts should be resolved with penalties. Nevertheless, the method addresses the attitudes and beliefs of both students and their parents. The target groups that are included in the methods include students of all ages: 6-10 years old, 11-13 years old, 14-18 years old. The only group which is excluded are the students from the first to the third grade, who are considered too young for an implementation of the method according to the rules.

The main objectives and aims of the method are emotional literacy, forgiveness and reconciliation and dealing with conflict in a positive way. According to that, the main learning objects for students are active listening; respect for confidentiality; nonviolent communication; peer mediation and self-organising skills for the mediation club. As for teachers, it is really important to adopt compliance with rules and methods of mediation; basic observance of neutrality; appreciation of the students' dignity; and tolerance for diversity.

6.1 Short description of the method

There are five steps in the method with which the students are familiar with:

1. Defining the rules (what is mediation, the role of the mediator without interrupting someone and confidentiality, the neutrality of the mediator);
2. The description of the situation (Each participant of the mediation process tells their side of the story for the possible conflict. The mediator uses paraphrasing so that, within the very process, the students can hear the other side.);
3. The ability to ask each other questions and define positions;
4. Offering a possible solution (solutions can be varied, and the mediator repeats them all in the end);
5. An agreement on the solution that is acceptable for both sides. If mediation doesn't lead to a solution, it is repeated twice and the adult decides on the conflict.

6.2 Example 1

Resolving the conflict over the accusation of cheating during the test (Student 1 accused Student 2 of copying her test for which Student 1 got a negative mark as a punishment, because the teacher thought that Student 1 was cheating). They decided to tell the truth to the teacher (that they both cheated (helped each other for only one exercise) and asked her to annul the punishment and let them write the test again. They promised that they will not cheat again. The teacher agreed.

6.3 *Example 2*

Resolving the conflict over the accusation of illegal smoking (Student accuses another of having problems with her parents who found a pack of cigarettes among her belongings).

6.4 *Example 3*

In a work group, one student doesn't do their part of the homework, so the other student gets a lower grade as well.

6.5 *Roles*

Teachers' role is to **recognise** that there is a conflict and that the children cannot solve it themselves. Then the teacher should **ask** what the conflict is about and refer students to the mediation club if the conflict is suitable. Teachers in charge of MC are responsible for **supporting** mediators, and should be close to being able to help or advise peer mediators if needed. They also talk to mediators **after** the mediation session about the process, feelings and needs of mediators and celebrate successes together. Students directly involved in the quarrel are supposed to ask for peer mediation (through a process that could be different for every school) and participate in the mediation session.

The role of students who are in a situation to resolve their conflict is:

- strengthening self-awareness and their identity;
- empathising with each other;
- developing awareness of individual and collective responsibility;
- changing attitudes about how to resolve conflicts.

Numbers of students involved: group activity/direct activity (quarrel)

Two students are peer mediators in one quarrel, and parties in conflict are two or more children as parties in conflict.

The Teachers' Council supports the method and is further educated in its application (new members of the Council undergo the education). The family is informed and asked to support the child. In some schools, if the available funds are sufficient, a three day training for parents of peer mediators is organised, so that parents understand the model and learn the same skills as children and can therefore support them better and even change the way conflicts are solved within the family.

The school principal supports preventive programs and nonviolent conflict resolution through peace-keeping corners and mediation. They get acquainted with the work methodology and provide the means for the professional development of teachers. Then, it's necessary to secure the facilities for the club and at the beginning inform and recruit teachers for the programme.

6.5.1 The role of the school pedagogue

A pedagogue documents and tracks how to carry out activities. They educate students who are facing mediation for the first time. The role of the school pedagogue is to coordinate between the teachers, parents, and students in implementing the method, take care of education, and motivate and encourage the implementation of the method. Together with school psychologists they can give training for peer mediators, parents and school staff when needed.

Non-teaching school staff (apart from the psychologist, pedagogue and librarian) have not been included so far, but they should be invited to participate and use the information and skills in an informal way and to be able to support and promote peer mediation in general. In the end they are informed about the method of non-violent conflict resolution, so that they can detect children who are in conflict.

7. Tips for using the methods and their transferability

7.1 *When and how to use the methods*

Friendship Cards can be used with different age groups 3- 5 years old, 6-10 years old, 11-13 years old, 14-18 years old. The cards can be used as a **preventive or educational tool** or as an **intervention** tool (when the conflict between peers is already present). When it is used as a preventive tool it teaches children and adolescents how to quarrel in an amicable way. As an intervention tool it can be used by different professionals and even by parents or caregivers. The cards can be used when two or more children quarrel, when a child is constantly angry, when there are disputes between parents or caregivers and their children, when there is conflict between siblings and other cases when a conflict is impinging on relationships and/or academic endeavours.

The Litigare bene method is used in families and in schools, mainly in age groups under 11 years old. For younger children (1-3 years old) only the 2 steps back are required, in Kindergarten and primary school it is possible to use the Conflict corner as an intervention tool, where students can go to do their negotiations, and as an educational tool, when they prepare it and share decisions about it. Sometimes teachers start to use the Litigare bene method because they need it for addressing difficult cases, like a child with a very low capability of expressing emotion in a way that may be acceptable by the group. An angry child may learn to express their feelings using the feelings photo that may be on the table of the Conflict corner.

7.2 *Transferability of methods*

When talking about the transferability of methods, **Peer mediation** requires a longer and more complex training, for teachers and students and the support of a whole school approach. Furthermore, Peer Mediation relies on a network of schools, teachers and accompaniment of trainers. For what concerns **Litigare Bene**, the involvement of the school staff is important as well, but it requires an easier training. On the other hand, **Friendship Cards** can be used by a single teacher, by a personal decision, without asking colleagues to do a shared project.

8. Other activities about conflict, violence, and war

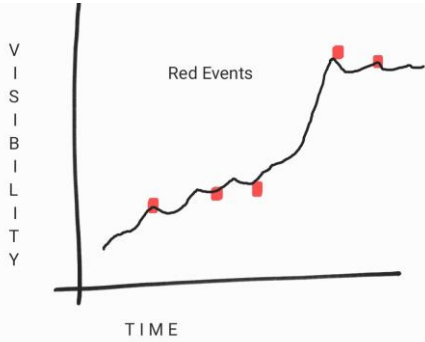
This chapter includes a collection of exercises (handouts) that concerns the difference between conflict and war, which is a very common semantic confusion as mentioned above. The handouts will allow teachers to start working in a perspective of nonviolent conflict transformation to raise awareness and clarity around these concepts. These are preliminary activities that can be employed in classes of students but also with adults. These exercises may help teachers and parents choose a method and highlight how the concept of conflict includes children's quarrels and discussions, but does not include violence.

8.1 Handout 1: What are we talking about when we talk about “conflict”?

This exercise is from the Intellectual Output [Curriculum on Nonviolent Conflict Transformation for Educators](#), produced by EducATe Erasmus Consortium, who worked together during 2015-18 and had included partners of Arguing at School Project: CPP, CPO, and 3 teachers from the Ivan Goran Kovačić School (Vrbovsko, Croatia).

Individual work ²	<p>What does “conflict” mean for me?</p> <p>Participants have white paper, pens, and colored pencils. Here is the succession of instructions to be said one after the other, after a few minutes.</p> <p>Paint an image of “conflict”.</p> <p>Write three words related to the word: “conflict”.</p> <p>Is there an emotion? If not, add one to the list of words or something to the drawing</p> <p>Is there a concept, or an idea? If not, add one.</p> <p>Is there a desire? If not, add one.</p>
Listening exercise in small groups	<p>As a result, each participant has a paper with their work. They have 15 minutes in groups of four or five people to share their work. What is “conflict” for each participant? Which emotions, concepts, and images are there? For example, here is a list of words and images that often have been written in many groups in the last decade:</p> <p><i>Images:</i> A bomb. A storm, a Knight, a broken egg, a wall ... Two people ... Many people and many different roles painted; yelling, tears, symbolic painting like walls or abstract painting</p> <p><i>Emotions:</i> anger, fear, anxiety, etc.</p>

² This exercise is from the Intellectual Output [Curriculum on Nonviolent Conflict Transformation for Educators](#), produced by EducATe Erasmus Consortium, who worked together during 2015-18 and had included partners of Arguing at School Project: CPP, CPO, and 3 teachers from the Ivan Goran Kovačić School (Vrbovsko, Croatia).

	<p><i>Concepts:</i> war, aggressiveness, aggression, danger, evolution, possibility, to win, to lose, to learn, nature, force, quarrelling, fighting, violence, etc.</p>
<p>Plenary</p>	<p>After the work in small groups, each participant keeps their paper and may add something, during a sharing in a plenary session with another list of questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the drawing and the related words look like something positive or negative? • Is there a danger for anybody? • Is it a conflict or is there any violence? • This is the main question. What was happening was violence or was it a conflict? • When one feels, and says: <i>“This is a conflict!”</i>, does this moment look more like a dot or more like a line? The “things” drowned look more like single events or are they happening during days, weeks, or years? This picture represents an example of the relationship between the duration of the conflict and single-spot events during the conflictual relationship. If your conflict looks like a dot, is it possible to draw a timeline before and after it? 
<p>Final Sharing</p>	<p>What did we learn about the conflict concept?</p>

8.2 Handout 2: Is it conflict, violence, or war?

Another activity regarding the difference between the concept and the experience of conflict and the reality and the concept of war is the Form: is it [conflict or is it violence](#)? It is a simple warm-up tool. It is a collection of images and each participant can decide if the images belong to the set of “conflict” “war” or “violence”. In this way, it is possible to see a collection of “referents” connected to the three words. Usually, no image takes 100% of the choices. The Form produces a pie chart for each image and this makes it visible if there is an agreement in the group or not. When the plenary sees the pie charts, it is possible to discuss the different interpretations. Images can give insights into discussing the concepts of

war, violence, and conflict. As a development of this exercise, the second step may be to ask participants for new images related to “war”, “conflict” or “violence”. A second round of discussion may be with images chosen by participants. They may make a new Form and use it for repeating the exercise with the same group or with a different group. The same images and a collection of words (emotions and words related to “conflict” can be used in a plenary discussion after a phase of individual and small group work similar to the one in handout 1, giving to the group papers with these images and words instead of the white papers. All these exercises aim to give the group the time and the stimulus to discuss conflicts, quarrels, and violence, without giving a lecture, but giving the time to listen to each other and to understand that is important to build a common language and a deeper awareness about this phenomenon.

8.3 Handout 3: Distinction between conflict and violence

Mind the difference between war and conflict! A synthesis of all the discussions made by small groups, plenary, and individuals may be written together inside a flipchart like this:

CONFLICT	WAR

After this group exercise, it is possible to make the discussion richer by comparing the group’s result with these tables, or with many different dictionaries. Some examples of the tables³ follow:

CONFLICT ARGUING	WAR VIOLENCE
Relationships Vulnerability Collaboration Compromise Love, stronger relationships	Polarization bad/good Victim. destruction Escalation The damage is done. You cannot fix it Separation
Responsability Choice Transforming Learning	Mistrust Hiding “I don't have a choice. It is bigger than me” Lost
Win win situation Growth	Loser Defeat
Power Communication Reconciliation	Power Communication

³ The part in *italic* is from Daniele Novara, *la Grammatica dei conflitti*, Sonda 2011.



CONFLICT	WAR
<i>Intention/wish to face the problem (conflict) and keep the relationships</i>	<i>Intentional degradation of the opponent with the presence of irreversible damage either physical or psychological</i>
<i>Contrast, contrariness, disagreement, opposition, critical resistance (without components of irreversible harm)</i>	<i>Willingness to solve the problem (conflict) wearers eliminating who brings the problem itself</i>
<i>Development of the relationship as possible, although difficult and problematic</i>	<i>Elimination of the relationship as a form of oversimplified and one-sided "solution"</i>

CONFLICT	WAR
Who decides to do it? People do it. A person does it with communication, without weapons, and without killing. (Interpersonal conflicts. There are intrapersonal conflicts, too.)	Who decides to do it? States or alliances of states do it with an army and propaganda.
Conflicts usually happen, without the need for laws to foresee and regulate them. There are Laws about some sort of conflicts (trials or mediation or diplomacy etc.).	In the laws, it is written if, when, and how war can be waged. It requires preparation and finances. (There are rules about who has the power to decide, to put public money into it, to decide to do it, declare it, command it, decide who wins and who is defeated, etc.)
It may be an opportunity for the growth of the relationship and all people involved (learning skills).	It may be an opportunity, not for all, but for those who make money and political power with this means. In the age of H-bombs, the risk of annihilation of life on Earth makes the role of the "winner" nonsense.
It is a spontaneous part of all human relationships, mother-child included.	It is not a spontaneous phenomenon, a strategy must exist, with objectives to be achieved and budgets with cost/benefit forecasts.
It happens, without any particular training. There is the possibility of learning to manage conflicts in a competent, effective, and nonviolent way.	Special training is essential to learn how to use weapons and respect the roles and the rules required by war.

It is also possible to use a bigger table with three columns:

CONFLICT	VIOLENCE	WAR

After the individual work, small groups work, and a plenary discussion for filling out the table, it is interesting to compare the result with the definition written by

the World Health Organisation (WHO): *“The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation.”*⁴

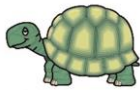
8.4 Handout 4: How are you in case of conflict?

This is an individual exercise in two steps. A group discussion can follow it. This exercise is from the *Interactive Exhibition Conflitti, litigi e altre rotture (Conflicts, quarrels and other hassles)*. Think about a case of conflict that involved you. When you are in conflict with another person, your actions may resemble the behaviour of the following animals.

8.4.1 What kind of beast are you?



The eagle: I impose myself on the other, I fight to win



The turtle: I prefer to flee, avoid or ignore the conflict



The chameleon: I go along with what the other person proposes, says, thinks



The fox: I seek compromise, bargain, and give in only if I gain something, too

⁴ World Health Organization. (1996). Global consultation on violence and health. *Violence: a public health priority*. Geneva: WHO.



The dolphin: *I try to understand what the other wants, but also I express what I want. I propose solutions that satisfy both as much as possible.*

Second step. *What are the advantages and the disadvantages of your kind of reaction in this conflict? Are the suggestions of this table meaningful for you?*

Advantages and disadvantages are there in any kind of "reaction"	Advantages	Disadvantages
Eagle	You put yourself forward with confidence, and express your ideas.	You ignore the other, often you only see yourself
Turtle	You suffer little, you do not cause pain	You appear weak, there is no relationship, you are left with the fear of conflict.
Chameleon	You make the other person satisfied, you are able to listen and understand other people.	You give up your needs, you appear passive. It's not clear what you are really like or what you want.
Fox	You meet part of your needs.	You look opportunistic, self-interest prevails.
Dolphin	You seek cooperation, both parties are satisfied.	You need a lot of time and energy, collaboration is not always possible.

8.5 Handout 5: "Old rules" to be abolished

When reading the educational autobiography of adults, it is easy to find the experience of being judged as a "bad child" because of quarrelling. An "education path" that blames and humiliates children reduces their self-esteem, leading to violence and self-destruction. Nonviolent conflict transformation's first step is to abolish this old "rule".

- *Has anybody had some experience of this kind of adult attitude against children quarrelling?*
- *Which one? Is there an "old rule" that may be better to abolish? Which one?*

These questions may start the work of a group of adults (like teachers or parents), and allow them to reflect on the awareness of the education received. Giving an example, this picture is from an Italian primary school. It shows children quarrelling as two devils, the label "bad children" is connected to quarrels, not to violence. The "good children", like angels, never argue. This is a "rule" that creates a confusing message. What is forbidden, violence or quarrels? Again the misunderstanding about this difference appears. It considers "do not quarrel" as if

it were a rule. But this is not a rule, it is an impossible prescription, a double bond, and a legacy from a misunderstanding of religion.

Have you seen anything like this at school?



8.6 Handout 6: The three protective functions of children's quarrels

After three months or more, of experimentation in the class with one of the methods of arguing at school, it is interesting to involve the adults, teachers and parents, in a discussion starting from this question: *What have the children or students learned during these months? How did the quarrels made with the method we introduced in class influence their growth?*

1) <i>Self regulative capacity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be able to find an agreement without help • Regulate individual interests
2) <i>Decentralisation capacity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be able to see the problem from another point of view • Be able to visualise the situation with an external eye • Develop the mental plastic capacity
3) <i>Creative-divergent capacity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I have to surrender because the other one is more creative than me" • "I'm going to look for something that I like more than what I wanted to share with my friend because he didn't want to share it" • It is an active disaffirmation, it is possible to give up without being a loser

9. Workshops for students on conflict

The Curriculum for the development of emotions and communication skills in children was created as part of the KA1 Erasmus+ project on How children can argue well according to the Litigare bene method used in Montessori schools. The full curriculum is available [here](#).

The curriculum includes a set of workshops on different themes: conflicts, emotional literacy, communication.

The aim of the workshops is to teach students and their parents the importance of recognizing basic emotions and recognizing them in other people as well. They can learn the importance of nonviolent communication, conflict resolution, and relaxation techniques.

The expected outcomes were stated as follows:

- students will know how to name all four primary emotions;
- techniques of nonviolent conflict resolution will be used (*Conflict corner*);
- students will use relaxation techniques;
- parents will know the importance of expressing emotions.

The guidelines for the workshops are available in the [Curriculum](#).

On Conflict	On emotions	On communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conflict Recognition ● Nonviolent Conflict Resolution ● Steps in peaceful boxes ● Practice of non-violent conflict resolution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Getting to know emotions ● Anger ● Happiness ● Fear ● Sadness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Message ● The language of the snake - the language of the giraffe ● I - YOU messages ● Verbal and nonverbal communication ● Active Listening ● Mutual relations building through communication ● The Golden Book

10. The Cooperative Council

The name *Cooperation Council* refers to an interactive way of working with pupils or students involving everyone at the same time. It is a tool to activate resources from peer groups, created by Célestin Freinet⁵. He started using it to allow the circularity of ideas and proposals, the discussion or planning, the management of conflicts, and the decision about choices important for everybody. It is a tool that guarantees class management without the direct intervention of the teacher and is structured starting from a cooperative idea of conflict and content management.

Célestin Freinet was the first to use the term “Conseil de coopération”, Cooperation Council. The popular school conceived by Freinet was built starting from the culture of ordinary people, it was underpinned by new values and contents that started from the expressive needs of the people. The strong points of this pedagogy were work, community life, solidarity between people, and the ability to achieve by sharing. Freinet started from the belief that the renewal of the school should arise from a reorganisation of a material type, for this reason, we spoke of “pedagogical materialism” referring to his methods.

Freinet, through empirical methods, had begun to experiment with a series of techniques. The greatness of his pedagogy derives from the fact that the students had concrete experience of reality, everything became a subject of study, they learned from peasant life, from the stimuli deriving from the parents’ jobs, from the specific activation of cooperative methodologies.

10.1 Freinet’s devices

In his didactic setting, in the school he had founded together with his partner Elise, some techniques were fundamental and together with actual didactic actions constituted the corpus of his job.

⁵ The historical context helps to understand Freinet’s methods and the importance of the Cooperation Council. C. Freinet was born into a peasant family in Provence in 1896. He was a child prodigy. In 1914, he obtained his professorship, but he was drafted into the French army and was seriously injured during the WWI. He becomes a convinced pacifist, and after his wounding, he shifts his attention to the weaker sections of the population. In 1919, he got a job in a school in the small Provençal village, where he started his pedagogical experiments and the Freinet pedagogy. In 1923, he resumed his studies and graduated. He opened his own school, called the Freinet School. He began to participate in conferences where he met pedagogues Ferrière, Claparède, and Cousinet. The latter followed the movement of the Active School which carried forward an innovative discourse on research in methods, teaching, making use of scientific experimentations, and addressing the wider social classes. From these ideas, private institutions called new schools were founded throughout Europe. With the help of the workers’ organisations he built and opened the Freinet School in Vence in 1935, which in 1990 became a state school with special status. During the Second World War, the Freinet school was closed. In 1961, the Fédération Internationale des Mouvements de l’École Moderne (FIMEM) was founded to coordinate adherents of Freinet’s pedagogical methods. It was not only France that benefited from this special pedagogy, it soon spread throughout Europe, including Italy. Freinet died in Saint-Paul de Vence, on October 8, 1966.

- The “Free text”. In the free text, the pupil could write about what interested them , starting from their emotions, from last-minute events. One can write the free text when the student feels like it or when a particular situation affects a pupil. The school newspaper was printed for publishing the most interesting free texts. The whole class examined the texts and chose some of them. According to Freinet, this rule is an incentive to write more and better.
- The “Living calculus” is a way of doing calculations starting from the concrete mathematical problems that were posed by the life of the class. For example, how many sheets are needed for the typography? How much do they cost?
- The “School typography”. There was a double motivation: learning to print a text after writing and processing it but also learning a trade. Being a typographer was a question of dual learning, on the one hand, intellectual and on the other concrete for the future work. Children learned to reflect, read, write, and work by handling the typographical characters, aligning them on the ruler, and drafting the proofs, which they corrected with the teacher.
- The “School Journal”, called by Freinet “The Book of Life”. Its contributions, written by children or students, were the subject of discussion for the whole class. They were an opportunity to arrive at a definitive text that was good for everyone and usually offered the opportunity to start a dialogue with children from other classes or other schools.
- The “Interscholastic Correspondence”. This technique made it possible to break the isolation of country schoolchildren. It brought together students from different classes or schools.
- The “Workboxes” were materials for laboratory purposes. They could relate to carpentry such as mechanics or plant cultivation. They were active tools that were used to learn and they were all attributable to the context in which the children found themselves living.
- The “Work Plans”, what we could define as the programs, were prepared together by teachers and pupils.
- The “popular pedagogy” was therefore not satisfied with activating the students but started from the strong motivation to learn and saw the cooperative moment as the essential fulcrum of the work of the class.
- The whole structure of popular pedagogy follows what we find today in the Cooperation Councils.
- The “Cooperative Council”

10.2 The structure of the Cooperative Council

The Cooperation Council is the meeting of the whole class with the teacher, where together, and in a circle⁶, they manage the life of the class. Usually, they meet inside the classroom, but there can be different choices depending on the environments that the structure makes available. Gathering in a circle is very important because it corresponds to one of the most basic rules of communication: being able to look at everyone, make eye contact, and to be able to recognize all the non-verbal messages that play a large part in human communication.

It is very important to keep faith with this proxemic modality. Depending on the age of the pupils, the circle is made with chairs and banquettes or can be done sitting on a carpet, which is particularly appreciated by younger children. To encourage everyone to respect each other while speaking, the Witness of the speech can be used. An object is held in the hand of the person who is speaking and only the person holding the baton can speak. It is a useful tool for learning to respect your turn to speak.

Targets: school-age children, from kindergarten to high school, and groups who need to live together.

Place: in the classroom or other suitable place.

The cooperation council should be done once a week, always on the same day and possibly at the same time. The cyclical nature of work and the rituality of its development have a very important symbolic value. Children become used to having a specific day to discuss and tell their chores, they miss it when the Council is postponed.

Duration: depending on the age of the pupils and the topics to be covered, the time to devote to this tool should not exceed 30/45 minutes. 15 minutes are ok for smaller children.

Aims and benefits: It serves to develop cooperative social skills and to learn collective and individual rights, with an awareness of the responsibilities they entail. With this tool, the class group can achieve significant learning in the context of interaction with peers and with the adult world. The Cooperation Council (CC) is a tool for addressing problems, troubles, conflicts. It is not a court, but a problem-solving place where people live in mutual respect. It resembles a circle around which children and teachers gather so that everyone can see each other. Children and young people will be able to learn to get to know each other better, to cooperate, to manage individual rights about collective rights, to listen actively, to

⁶ The Cooperation Council is not a Circle Time. The Circle Time methodology was devised in the 1970s. All participants are arranged in a circle, also to create a shared moment in which everyone can feel equal. The teacher will have the role of coordinator, to facilitate the discussion and establish the spatial and temporal criteria, creating a collaborative and empathic environment among all the participants in the circle. The main objective of Circle Time is to simplify communication between peers and deepen knowledge among students, to create integration within the class, and to enhance the skills of individual students and the group class. Even the teacher will be able to benefit from the application of this methodology which will allow him to get to know his pupils and the dynamics present within the class better.

accept differences, to develop self-esteem, a sense of responsibility, autonomy, one's participation, solidarity, own leadership, positive attitudes, the meaning of belonging to the group, tolerance, creativity. The Cooperative Council reduces misunderstanding and promotes mutual understanding.

How does it work: The Wall Journal is a sort of bulletin board dedicated exclusively to communications related to the tool. It has three parts. The first one is devoted to congratulations. Activating a process of recognition of the elements that make the class feel better at a relational level is very important. During the first part of the Cooperation Council students learn this skill. By highlighting the congratulations, the class is enabled to put on the appropriate glasses and look at positive things, knowing how to give them the right emphasis. The second part is devoted to critics. One of the characteristics of this tool is to allow children and young people to identify the wrong things, saying them without fear. This makes it possible to carry out a work of prevention about abusive attitudes. Undermining the logic of judgement by replacing it with constructive criticism is an element of great pedagogical-educational validity. Finally, the third part is dedicated to topics (arguments to be discussed). The group of peers should write in the topics column, even if at the beginning, especially in the early days, the teacher can be a stimulus.

The choice about what topic should be discussed has to be made by the students .

The Wall Journal should be hung in the classroom in a visible place and above all accessible to all those who will need to use it. In the case of secondary schools, hanging the wall journal in the classroom may block the spontaneity a little, therefore in that case is better a different solution, such as hanging it on the inside door of a wardrobe or putting it in the desk drawer or similar things.

The teacher who becomes responsible for the Cooperative Council should compile a Report, a Minute Book. With secondary school students, the teacher may not be part of the circle, but his function of control and facilitator remains nonetheless. The teacher can stay outside the circle but is always present in the room. The Report is written in any case, even if the teacher only has the role of observer. The cooperative council starts at the beginning or during the year. It is important to present the concept, its democratic principles, and its goals. The Wall Journal is useful for making the Agenda: children learn to congratulate others and to criticise instead of complaining. Congratulations and criticisms are written in the Report so that they can be referred to, when necessary. Gradually, they will use the Cooperation Council to talk about different topics. Cooperation will gradually settle in and change the classroom climate. The topics and items on the agenda are recorded, as well as the decisions taken. The agenda begins with a reprise of the previous Cooperation Council, followed by congratulations, criticisms, and other topics written on the Wall Journal. It ends with "How is the class?"

The role of the teachers: The teacher's function should primarily be one of clarification and facilitation. Through the use of active listening techniques, the teacher can help children and young people in the reformulation of some concepts, in understanding some topics that are proposed or brought to the attention of

others, in the eventual mediation between pupils, in the definition of what is decided and spoken.

Another function is that of control. The teacher should be the guarantor that the procedure and the rules are respected, that the right to speak is respected by all, that all pupils can give their opinion, and that it is possible to make a synthesis with a feasible proposal, sustainable by the class.

Students' learning: In particular, with the Cooperation Council, boys and girls learn to:

- Listen;
- Speak in group and adapt their speeches into a communication intention, express themselves clearly;
- Choose and organise information, narrate in an orderly manner, bring out the main idea, summarise;
- Handle problems and conflicts through cooperation;
- Analyse situations with a gym of objectivity;
- Organizing starts from practice and personal experiences;
- Give an opinion, listen to different opinions, draw conclusions;
- Deciding democratically with everyone's contribution, thus exploring the multiple possibilities that the group can offer;
- Seek and find solutions, starting from the assumption that nothing is definitive and that the group can experiment, then verify the results at the next council meeting. All proposals can find space and the application of a given proposal will be guaranteed to be decided by the group and not just by the teacher;
- Achieve many goals in communication and personal and social development;
- In practice, how to handle a problem:
 1. definition of the problem;
 2. proposal of possible alternatives;
 3. evaluation of developments and scenarios;
 4. choice by the group;
 5. application of the solution;
 6. evaluation of the result (the next time).

11. Conclusion

In conclusion, this toolkit offers a comprehensive set of resources and strategies to empower teachers in managing conflicts in classrooms. Developed under the Arguing at School project, it combines the efforts of 10 partners, including 4 schools, and draws on extensive research and training activities. The toolkit encompasses three established conflict transformation methods and additional effective approaches. Its objectives are to equip teachers with conflict resolution skills and provide students with tools for peaceful problem-solving. While implementing these methods may require time, they lay the groundwork for a harmonious learning environment. The toolkit also supports the "Whole School Approach" to conflict resolution, promoting positive relationships among teachers and students. In this respect, the toolkit wants to offer inputs related to expanding the scope of the study beyond peer relations and teacher interventions during conflicts. Accordingly, the Arguing at school project wants to stress the importance of focusing on the overall development potential of schools and understand how the entire system functions. This includes examining how school administrators and teachers themselves can take proactive steps to improve the transferability of these pedagogical methods. Accordingly, the toolkit offers teachers observational skills, empathy, and communication, fostering an inclusive classroom. Students benefit from a safer space for conflict resolution, gaining independence and nonviolent communication skills. By prioritizing transferability and addressing broader aspects of school development, this toolkit aims to make these methods more widely adopted and impactful in educational settings. Together, let's build a more empathetic educational community.

Contact Information

- Arguing at school Project and News
<https://eu.metododanielenovara.it/progetti/arguing-at-school-en/>
<https://eu.metododanielenovara.it/news/>
- CPP Centro Psicopedagogico per la pace e la gestione dei conflitti -
<https://www.metododanielenovara.it/>
- IIHL - <https://iihl.org/>
- FREREF Forum de régions européennes pour la recherche, l'éducation et la formation - <https://freref.eu/en/>
- Innovate4Future - <https://www.innovate4future.eu/>
- Relationships are Forever Foundation - <https://www.friendshipcards.org/>
<https://www.facebook.com/friendshipcards.org>
- Center for Peace, Nonviolence and Human Rights Osijek - <https://centar-zamir.hr/>
- INTRO - <http://www.fondazioneintro.it/>
- Colegiul National Sfantul Sava - <https://licsfsava.ro/site/>
- Maria Regina College Naxxar Induction Hub -
<https://edumalta.gov.mt/en/schools/state-schools/maria-regina-college-naxxar-induction-centre>
- Osnovna Skola Ivana Gorana Kovačića Vrbovsko - <http://os-igkovacic-vrbovsko.skole.hr/>

ANNEX 1: The Learning Teaching Training Activity

The Learning Teaching Training Activity of the project Arguing at School event, which took place in Ogulin, Croatia aimed to introduce teachers and educators from different countries to three innovative psycho-pedagogical methods developed to teach both children and teenagers how to handle conflicts without the help of adults. These three methods are the “Litigare bene” method by Daniele Novara, developed by CPP in Italy, Switzerland, Croatia and in a few schools in other countries, the Friendship cards developed by Relationships are Forever Foundation, used in Malta and translated in 20 languages, and the Peer Mediation method developed and used in Croatia and in other countries. The main focus was to highlight the fact that adults (parents, educators or teachers) should no longer play an active role in solving children’s disputes, instead they should teach them emotional literacy which, together with communication skills and this will enable them to deal with their conflicts (i.e quarrels with colleagues) themselves.

Due to this project, teachers not only gained theoretical knowledge of the methods and shared experiences, but they also worked on their personal development and may have changed their traditional beliefs related to conflicts. Several experts from different countries provided teachers with invaluable advice on how to enable teenagers and children to handle disagreements in a non-violent way and improve their relationships with their peers.

The LITIGARE BENE Method

The Litigare Bene method is designed for younger students, who have a disagreement at school or kindergarten. It emphasises the importance of communication and expressing feelings of those involved. The teacher takes a step back, avoiding to blame children in an effort to solve a conflict. Instead, the role of the teachers is to develop a pedagogical choice about children’s quarrel, and to organise the possibility for the children to express their feelings and their own version of the story and reach an agreement of their own. They listen to the other’s version of the story and the feelings involved. A dedicated space is created with the guidance of the teachers in Kindergarten and Primary schools where children can go, sit and talk to each other about “the problem” which is usually called “Conflict Corner”. With the rituals and the rules of the Conflict corners children have the chance to learn to talk to each other even in situations of tension.

The FRIENDSHIP CARDS Method

This innovative tool was developed by Relationships are Forever Foundation in Malta and it is useful since it can be used both at home and at school. The method uses a set of cards that display a range of emotions and actions and their consequences. It is extremely interactive: by playing a game and using the cards, children have an easier time understanding the importance of sharing their feelings and emotions. Friendship cards create a safe place for children to speak out, to

identify their feelings, to be comfortable to do this and thus develop their dialogue skills and emotional literacy.

his method, tailored for children and pre-teens in schools, brings forth numerous advantages: it serves as a valuable tool for teachers in gaining a deeper understanding of students' needs, enabling them to effectively guide them towards solutions. Additionally, it fosters autonomy, responsibility, social skills, and emotional intelligence among both students and teachers. By promoting self-awareness, the Friendship Cards empower young individuals in honing critical thinking and expressing their perspectives.

The PEER MEDIATION Method

The Peer Mediation Method, as its name suggests, seeks to address conflicts without the direct intervention of adults or teachers. Instead, it engages students in the process of problem-solving. It involves the conflicting parties and an additional student or peer who facilitates discussions about various aspects of the conflict, aiming to reach a resolution.

This approach is crafted to empower students in resolving conflicts, fostering self-confidence, self-awareness, and empathy. Through this method, students acquire the skill of emotional regulation by taking a step back, actively listening to others, and recognizing that the issue at hand is not a reflection of the person involved, but rather a problem that can be resolved amicably.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the LTTA project successfully introduced teachers and educators to three innovative psycho-pedagogical methods aimed at teaching children and teenagers how to independently resolve conflicts. These methods emphasised the importance of equipping students with emotional literacy and communication skills to handle disputes without a direct adult intervention. The project not only provided theoretical knowledge but also facilitated personal growth and a shift in traditional beliefs about conflict resolution among teachers. The Friendship Cards method proved to be a highly interactive and effective tool for helping children express their emotions and improve their communication skills. Likewise, the Peer Mediation Method empowered students to take charge of conflict resolution, promoting self-confidence, empathy, and emotional regulation.

Overall, these methods have demonstrated their potential to enhance relationships and promote a more inclusive and harmonious learning environment especially if we are to consider the possibility of sequencing the 3 methods: Litigare Bene at a very early age, then the Friendship cards when children are in middle school and Peer mediation in highschool.