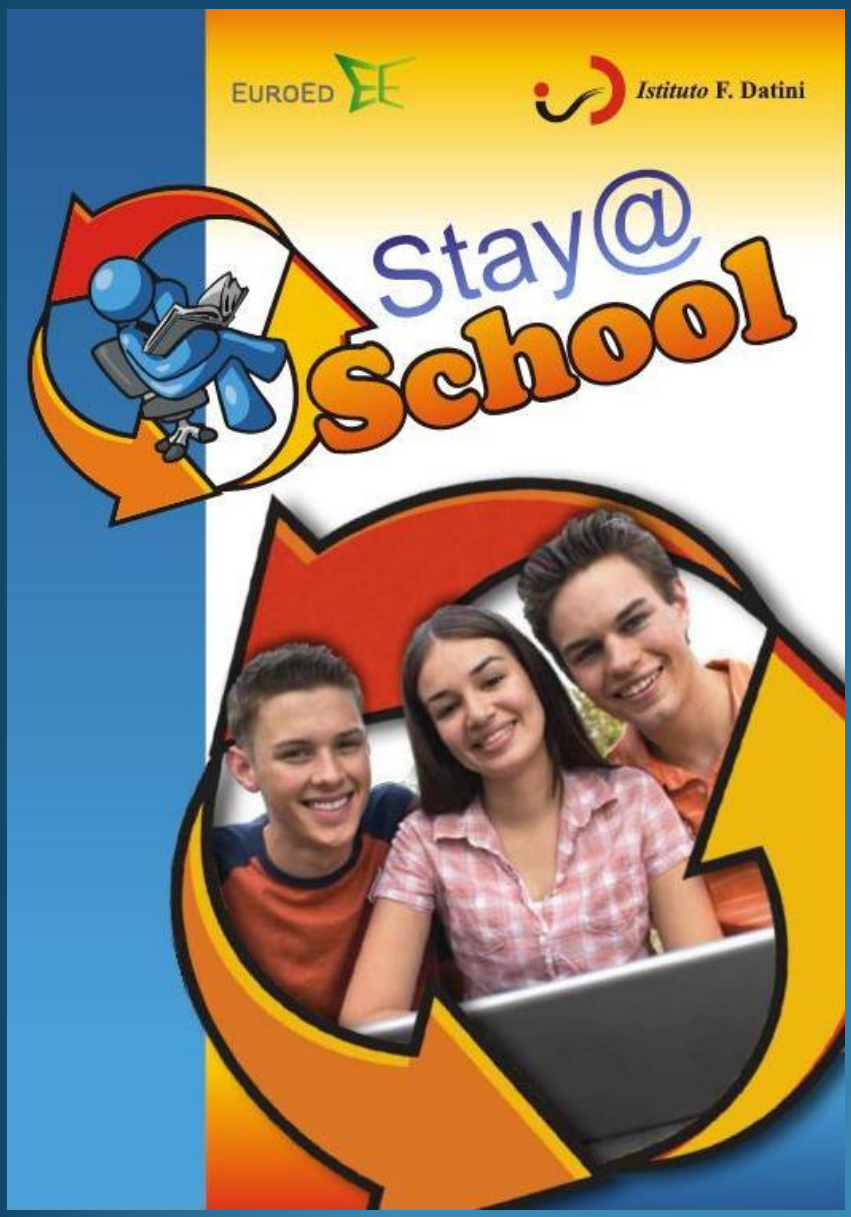

Stay@School

The School Inclusion Project

Ref. no. 2011-1-IT1-LEO05-01961
CUP: G32F11000680006

Life Long Learning Programme
Transfer of Innovation

Educational Material for teachers

Tools for assessing the risk of school dropout

Lifelong Learning Programme

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication [communication] reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

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Beforehand

One challenge is common to all European countries Educational System, the prevention school dropout. The School Inclusion N°134309-LLP-1-2007-1-IT-Comenius-CMP, financed in the framework of the Life Long Programme, Comenius subprogramme has given evidence to the fact that teachers are suffering from a lack of skills and competences, and consequently of motivation in understanding and dealing with pupils at risk of school abandoning. Teachers often are not able to identify with the necessary anticipation the manifesting of the risk factors leading drop out and to the necessary initiatives to give effective answers.

The Stay@School project to provide an effective answer to the needs of the teachers outlined above, intends to transfer the successful experience of the School Inclusion project, evaluated positively both by the European Commission and by the external evaluator: "the main contents of the teachers' training programme provides the necessary skills and tools to fight students' drop out and prevent early school leaving".
The project aims to improve the portal developed during the School Inclusion project in order to transfer its contents on a Geographical basis, focusing on the involvement of teachers from different countries that the ones that were involved in the previous project and as far as Italy is concerned, spreading the use of the School Inclusion Portal in different regions.

What is the material about?

One of the project objectives is to develop a collection of educational products on the prevention of early school leaving by engaging teachers in hands-on experience (learning by doing) aimed to test the skills and abilities acquired during the course, through the creation of education materials and easy to use flexible information to prevent and tackle the problem of scholastic drop-out (such as a brochure, a cartoon, a multimedia educational module, a short film, etc.).

We have chosen this type of self-assessment tools, closed-ended questionnaires, because they can be easily analyzed and they give teachers a realistic insight into the drop out phenomenon in their school.

These questionnaires give a sense of the strengths and weaknesses of the current drop out prevention strategies used in schools; they can also provide useful information for more realistic future action plans. They can be applied in any school.

The student questionnaires explore the characteristics of students at risk of dropping out and their family background context, academic history, experience with and opinions of schooling, attitude towards school, causes of dropout, and future plans.

The teacher questionnaire examines teacher-parent interaction, warning systems for students at risk, and school management and policies. The instruments focus on how schools recognize students at risk, the characteristic of schools with high dropout, reasons that schools believe cause student dropout, and what can be done to prevent dropout.

The parent questionnaire examines parents' experience with the schooling their child has received, parents' opinion of what should be done to keep children in school, competitive activities that distract their children from school.

1. SCHOOL DROPOUT RISK ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

(This questionnaire is addressed to pupils)

Read the following questions and give an honest answer.

1. Gender. F_____ M____

2. Residence: URBAN____ RURAL____

3. Nationality _____

4. You live with: FAMILY____ RELATIVES____ FOSTER CARE____ ALONE____

5. Parents' education:
NO HIGHSCHOOL____ HIGHSCHOOL____ COLLEGE____

6. Parents' occupation: FATHER_____ MOTHER_____

7. Your family's income:
less than 500 RON/ MONTH____ less than 1000 RON/ MONTH____ less than 2000 RON/ MONTH

8. How happy are you with?
a) your school results? VERY HAPPY____
HAPPY____
NOT VERY HAPPY____
NOT HAPPY AT ALL____

b) your peer students ? VERY HAPPY____
HAPPY____
NOT VERY HAPPY____
NOT HAPPY AT ALL____

c) your professors? VERY HAPPY____
HAPPY____
NOT VERY HAPPY____
NOT HAPPY AT ALL____

d) school in general? VERY HAPPY____
HAPPY____
NOT VERY HAPPY____
NOT HAPPY AT ALL____

9. I think that in my school:
a) The professors have a good relationship with the students:
NO___ MORE OR LESS___ YES____
b) I feel good when I'm at school:
NO___ MORE OR LESS___ YES____
c) The professors respect our opinions:
NO___ MORE OR LESS___ YES____
d) The professors show interest in our school results:
NO___ MORE OR LESS___ YES____

e) I am treated fairly:
NO___ MORE OR LESS___ YES____

10. In the last year how often did it happen that?:
a) a peer bullied you or laughed at you :
OFTEN___SOMETIMES ___NOT AT ALL
b) a peer didn't want to be friends with you:
OFTEN____SOMETIMES ___NOT AT ALL
c) you felt rejected at school :
OFTEN____SOMETIMES ___NOT AT ALL
d) you felt that you didn't like being at school:
OFTEN____SOMETIMES ___NOT AT ALL

11. Do you think sometimes that you want to do something different than to come to school? YES___NO___

12. In the last semester did you have problems related to skipping classes?

YES (with sanction)___ SOME PROBLEMS (with warning)____NO____

13. Do you find school disciplines interesting? YES___ SOME___ NO___

14. Do you study when you find something interesting? YES___NO___

15. Can you focus when you study or do your assignments? YES____MORE OR LESS____NO___

16. Do you usually do your assignments? YES___NO___

17. Do you like school? YES___NO___

18. Did you have problems at school in the last year?
a) fights with peers or other students : YES___NO___
b) caught smoking or drinking at school : YES___NO___
c) warned by principal or professors because of your behavior: YES___NO___

19. Do you like doing something better than coming to school? YES___NO___

20. If you answered "YES" to the last question: What else do you like better than coming to school??

21. Did you have problems with the law? YES___NO___
a) do you have a criminal case file ? YES___NO___
b) did you get a penalty ? YES___NO___
c) were you warned ? YES___NO___

22. Do you see yourself finishing high school? YES___NO___

23. If you don't see yourself finishing high school, you see yourself:
a) learning a craft
b) working
c) something else_____

24. Do you have friends that haven't finished high school?
YES__ (if "YES" How many? _____) NO___

25. Does your family show interest in your school results?
YES____ MORE OR LESS____ NO_____

26. Does your family encourage you to graduate from high school?
YES____ MORE OR LESS____ NO_____

27. Do you feel that you cannot cope with pressure at school?
YES___ SOMETIMES___NEVER__

28. Would you like to do something else than coming to school?
YES____ NO_____

29. Do you plan on working during high school years?
YES____ NO_____

30. Are there people around you that think school is a waste of time?
YES____ MORE OR LESS____ NO_____

31. Do you have older friends?
YES, MANY_____YES, A FEW , ____ONE____NO _____

32. Do you have health problems that might prevent you from finishing high school?
(exgoing to school, financial etc.) YES_____NO_____

33. Do you feel sometimes that your assignments are too difficult? YES_____NO_____

34. Can you do your assignments without help? YES_____NO_____

35. Do you think that in school you find understanding for your problems? YES_____NO_____

36. Do you think that is going to be difficult to travel to school until graduating high school?
YES_____NO_____

2. WORKSHEETS FOR IDENTIFYING CHILDREN AT RISK OF SCHOOL DROPOUT

Worksheet 1: Do I know how to be a good classmate?

I. Write down the values below in ascending order, from the less important to the most important, regarding the interests of your class.

Values	Value system in my class
Fun	.....
Learning	.....
Respect	.....
Understanding	.....
Competition	.....
Mutual help	.....
Personal interests	.....
Trust	.....
Friendship	.....
Freedom of speech	.....

Are you satisfied with the existing value system?
If not, what values would you like to become more important in your group? Why?
Did you ever discuss with your peer colleagues about the aspects that make you feel unsatisfied? What were the consequences?

II. Name three reasons for which you are proud of the group you are in:
.....
.....
.....
III. Name three reasons for which you are not happy with the group you are in:
.....
.....
.....

Worksheet 2: What kind of peer colleagues do I look for?

Complete the following sentences as you think it fits best with the beginning:

1. A good peer colleague is that who.....
2. My classmates are.....
3. I admire classmates who.....
4. I cannot stand classmates who.....……
5. I help classmates who.....

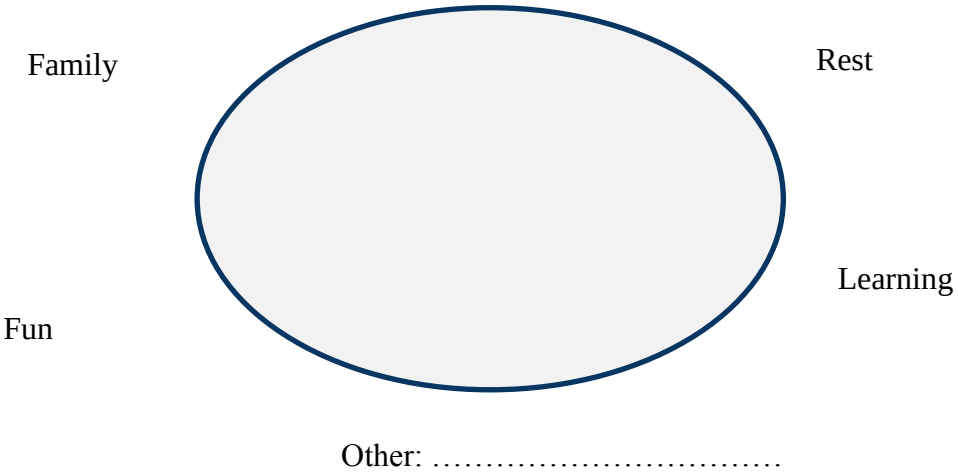
Worksheet 3: Learning – a chance or an obligation?

I. Complete the following sentences as you think it fits best with the beginning:

1. I find it hard to study.....
2. When I study.....
3. I find it easy to study.....
4. Only if you study.....

5. I think that what I am currently learning.....
6. Those that don't learn.....
7. I must learn.....
8. I think learning is a chance when.....
9. I am proud that I managed to learn.....
10. To succeed in life you have to.....

I. Divide the circle below in 5 sections that correspond to the following activities: family activity, learning, fun, rest, other activities (that are not mentioned below) and write for each activity the amount of time spent daily (the sum of the hours must be 24 and the amount of time for each section must correspond to the number of hours spend daily for each activity):



III. If you have completed the task above, answer the following questions:

a. Can you come to a quick conclusion regarding the activities mentioned in the circle above? What conclusion have you come to?

.....
.....

b. Do you think that the amount of time spent for learning is enough? Does it satisfy you? Does it satisfy the others (family etc.)?

.....
.....

c. Identify at least 3 ways of increasing the amount of time spent for learning:

1. .....
2.....
3. .....

d. How do you think these changes will impact on your daily schedule?

.....
.....

Worksheet 4: School – a stress factor?

1. I enjoy being a pupil because:

a.....
b.....
c.....

2. I don't like being at school because:
a.....
b.....
c.....

3. Write 3 things that you would like to be changed in your school life:
a.....
b.....
c.....

Can you change these things?
Who should do something to change them?
What can you do for it?
After completing this activity, you can put it into practice by playing a role game with the following "actors":

a. a potential teacher that brings up stress factors and a pupil
b. two classmates that don't like each other

3. MONITORING SHEET OF THE CHILD AT RISK OF SCHOOL DROPOUT

Name and First name_____
Age_____ Class_____

Responsible teacher:.....

Date of drafting:.....

Active test indicators at the child's first evaluation (check the answers):

A. Large number of absences without leave
B. Difficult family situation
C. Serious health problems and/or disabilities/handicap of the child
D. Previous cases of school dropout in the child's family
E. Major difficulties in transportation to school

Part I: Explanation of the child's specific situation, regarding the active indicators
Indicator .....
Situation at the moment when the tracking sheet was created:
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Other relevant aspects that were not described in the indicators analysis
Social behaviour

- In class

……
……

- Outside school

……
……

School information (the level of school success):

- Motivation for learning

.....

- Number of failed school subjects and their names

.....

- School subjects with good and very good results

.....

- School subjects with weak results

.....

- School – parents/ legal representatives relationship

.....

- Strengths

.....
.....

- Weaknesses

.....
.....

Part 2: Proposed solutions to diminish the risk of school dropout

With regard to the child's specific situation: causes of the problem that determine one or more active risk indicators, weaknesses and strengths – suggest solutions for diminishing the risk of school abandoning.

Take into consideration at least the following actions that you can take as a primary school teacher or head teacher of the monitorised child:

- Request support from the teachers (teachers of the school subjects with a large number of absences or weak results etc.);
- Support from the classmates: help from the one or more classmates for studying at the mentioned school subjects)
- Support offered by the parents' community – to help the family in the difficult situation
  - A social investigation in case of a precarious socio-economic situation of the family and/if there are any suspicions regarding neglecting or abuse on the child (municipality)
  - Intervention of a psychologist. Complete evaluation of the child with disabilities
  - Parental counselling and professional orientation (school counsellor)
- Involvement of private institutions (NGOs, sponsors etc) from the community (examples of activities):
  - Involvement in curricular or extracurricular activities (vocational activities or volunteering)
  - Support for furnishing or improving children's homes
  - Donations (books/clothes etc.)
  - Solutions for alternative transportation possibilities

4. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS/ PARENTS

A. Questionnaire for teachers:

In order to reach school success, pupils must receive a proper education. Please answer the following questions honestly, to help us identify the causes of school failure.

1. What is your motivation for assuming the role of teacher?
2. How can you define school failure?
3. What do you think the causes of school failure are?
4. How does the motivation to learn for certain school subjects correspond to the pupil's capacities?
5. What is your relationship with your pupils?
6. What do you usually discuss with the teachers that teach in your class?
7. Objectively assess your pupils. What are the effects of under/overvaluation of the pupils?
8. What do you think the phrase"a lazy pupil" means?
9. What are the difficulties that the pupils have in doing the homework for your subject?
10. What methods do you use for encouraging or punishing pupils and what are their effects on them?
11. What was the aspect that impressed you most during your visits at pupils' homes?
12. What is your opinion on the efficiency of pedagogical counselling sessions for parents?
13. What solutions can you name for preventing and/or diminishing school failure?

B. Questionnaire for parents

In order to reach school success, pupils must receive a proper education. Please answer the following questions honestly, to help us identify the causes of school failure.

1. Who is in charge of controlling the children in your family and how?
2. What is the relationship between you and your children?
3. Do you usually discuss in your family about the child's education?
4. What atmosphere is in your family?
5. Does your child do his/her homework with interest or does he/she need to be encouraged?
6. What are your child's favourite activities?
7. How often do you get in contact with the head teacher/ primary school teacher?