



Erasmus + VET Strategic Partnership

IENE 8 - Empowering migrant and refugee families with parenting skills

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Bite sized Learning Tool no. 1.3

**TITLE OF THE TOOL:**

**LEARNING DURING MIDDLE CHILDHOOD (6-12 YEARS)**

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## TITLE:

Learning during the middle childhood (6-12 years)

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To present the key aspects of cognitive changes during the middle childhood
2. To raise awareness about difficulties in learning experienced by refugee children
3. To help at-risk refugee parents and children from 6 to 12 years old on promoting positive parent-child relationships

## KEY POINTS

### **Particularities of learning during the middle childhood:**

- Cognitive changes during the middle childhood greatly expand children's capacities for solving problems and gaining necessary information to become increasingly competent and resourceful.
- In middle childhood is a growing the ability to reason in terms of abstract representations of objects and events. Between the ages of 6 and 9 years, most children gain capacities that enable them to reason effectively about increasingly complex problems and circumstances and by 10 to 12 years of age, children begin to show increased abilities for generalizing across concrete instances and for systematic problem solving and reasoning.
- Children begin to organize tasks more maturely and independently than in early childhood. This entails adopting goals for activities, subordinating knowledge and actions in the service of a super ordinate plan, and monitoring one's own activities and mental processes and increase both the opportunity and the capacity for acquiring information and for using new knowledge in reasoning, thinking, problem solving, and action.
- Compared with younger children, 6 to 12 year old children thus can solve more difficult, abstract intellectual problems and can master increased, more complex responsibilities at home and in other common settings.
- For parents, changes in children's cognitive competence necessitate alterations ranging from the content of conversations, strategies for control and influence over children's behavior, and expectations regarding competence and self regulation.

### **Key issues experienced by refugee parents and families:**

Cognitive development of young children in refugee families associated with socioeconomic inequality may differ from that of their counterparts. Learning and development are particular concerns for refugee children.

- anxiety, depression, and stress related to immigrations;
- fear of deportation of the parents;
- living in hostile communities that may not support programs for immigrants;
- limited languages proficiency and/or confidence to communicate;
- refugees are frequently moved between different accommodation centres during their asylum procedure.
- relocation brings additional stressors, a child enters a new educational environment and must negotiate multiple transitions, including transitions in family, friendships, schooling, community, language, culture, and identity
- many reception centres are located in distant or rural areas where schools are not well accessible and some refugee children do not attend school

### TIPS FOR PARENTS TO HELP THEIR CHILD TO LEARN

- Read together every day: picture book with dad before bed, a traditional family recipe, map and street signs , a text from a friend, a story.
- Write together every day: a shopping list , a letter to a friend, a message to dad, an envelope to a grandparent, a birthday card , a story with a neighbour, record facts , draw and colour in with brothers and sisters.
- Talk together every day: point things out, ask open questions, talk about the footy, talk about big ideas, passions, interests, favourite food, movies and books, current affairs, family history.
- Make up stories including “silly” stories and nonsense rhymes, make a puppet show.
- Play together every day: play a family game of cards, do a crossword or number puzzle , build with Lego, cook and bake, set the table, sort the recycling, count, conduct internet research
- Laugh together every day: tell a joke, make up rhymes and riddles, and watch a funny movie.
- Move together every day: go for a family walk or bike ride, dance, jump on the trampoline, swim , play ball games, run, skip.
- Explore together: museum or art gallery, library, listen to a concert, shop together etc.

## ACTIVITY

Learning with the whole family is focused on high aspirations for children, shared reading, a positive environment for homework, parent-child conversation, a cognitively stimulating home environment and support for social and emotional wellbeing.

Make a weekly **plan of activities to get involved children in** learning with the whole family.

*Weekly Planner*

<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>
<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Notes</i>	

## REFLECTION

Think to a strategy **to improve the learning of your child** .

## SELF ASSESSMENT

Chose 5 actions that you consider most important to motivate and help your children for learning:

- Show affection for your child. Recognize her accomplishments.
- Help your child develop a sense of responsibility—ask him to help with household tasks, such as setting the table.
- Talk with your child about respecting others. Encourage him to help people in need.
- Help your child set her own achievable goals
- Help your child learn patience by letting others go first or by finishing a task before going out to play.
- Encourage him to think about possible consequences before acting.
- Do fun things together as a family, such as playing games, reading, and going to events in your community.
- Continue reading to your child.
- Use discipline to guide and protect your child, rather than punishment to make him feel bad about himself.
- Praise your child for good behavior
- Support your child in taking on new challenges.
- Encourage her to solve problems, such as a disagreement with another child, on her own.
- Encourage your child to join school and community groups, such as a team sports, or volunteering.
- Provides children with the opportunity to improve mother tongue language and preserve a sense of identity and culture

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