

EMBRACE

FOSTERING INCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES
IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE (ECEC)



PR4: AWARENESS-RAISING TOOLKIT: INCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

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*"The training and education of ECEC staff is
central to the quality of ECEC provision"*

*"Many children with intellectual disabilities still
lack ECEC practitioners who are adequately
trained and equipped to meet their needs"*

UNICEF, 2014



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CHAPTER 1: DISSEMINATION STRATEGIES

1. OBJECTIVES OF THE TOOLKIT

Through the project, the partners have developed the **Awareness Raising Toolkit**, in order to provide nurseries and kindergartens with valuable resources for promoting the inclusion of children with intellectual disabilities in early childhood education and care (ECEC). This initiative seeks to address the limited understanding of the needs of these children among key stakeholders, as well as prevalent stereotypes and biases, which pose significant barriers to their integration into ECEC settings.

The Toolkit consists of resources designed for two primary target audiences:

- preschool-aged children (both with and without intellectual disabilities)
- adults, specifically parents of preschool-aged children (with or without intellectual disabilities) and community members.

The objective is to inform and educate these audiences, influencing their attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs to encourage inclusive ECEC environments for children with intellectual disabilities. The Toolkit will be disseminated widely through various channels, including multiplier events, press releases, the project website, partners' websites, social media, and direct engagement with key stakeholders.

2. TARGET GROUPS

The target groups of this campaign correspond to the general target groups of the project. The campaign, however, should target **primarily** those groups which will be responsible for the implementation of the EMBRACE COMMUNITY. This includes:

- Staff working in ECEC settings

- educational staff
- care staff
- auxiliary staff/assistants
- Leaders/heads of ECEC
 - nurseries
 - kindergartens
- Parents of pre-school children

Secondary target groups include those who might support the implementation of the **ADVOCATES**, particularly:

- Organizations active in the field of ECEC
- General public

General awareness raising efforts can be directed to the ECEC community, children's families and networks and the general public.

3. THINGS YOU WILL NEED

In order to reach a broader audience, including parents, school organizations and even school leaders, educators must implement the appropriate tools and methodology, to ensure that they will reach their relevant stakeholders. There are various techniques to use, ranging from social media posts, to invitational emails to reach the public or a specific target group (e.g., *parents*) and inform them about potential upcoming activities or simply for informative purposes (e.g., *Facebook post about Autism*).

In addition, if you wish to plan and organize an event, a campaign, or even invite the audience you are aiming for to learn more about your kindergarten's initiatives, there are a few basic steps that you need to follow.

① **Step 1: Promotional Materials**

You will need to create a few visual materials to either disseminate through your social media or give to the parents, teachers etc., when they visit your kindergarten.

Below are a few examples of visual materials that you could develop to invite stakeholders to attend an event or inform them about upcoming activities. The examples below use the EMBRACE project as a reference, but feel free to change and adjust the promotional materials to fit your target!

(A) Visual materials

- Factsheets (Annex 1)

② Step 2: Social media campaigns

Following the development of the promotional or informative materials you may want to use; you can also exploit the various social media platforms to convey your message and develop social media campaigns!

Through social media, most of the schools, parents and stakeholders are connecting and communicate.

Whether it is informative or inviting the audience to an event, you always need to adjust the language, tone and complexity of your content, to match your target group's needs.

For instance, if you wish to invite the parents of the children attending your kindergarten, you might prefer to use simple language and ensure that they feel engaged by the theme of the post.

In each country in each school, they need to decide which social media is appropriate for their target group for communicating with parents and external stakeholders so they can invite them to an event, sharing some information etc.

Tips for social media

- Dos

1. **Be respectful:** Everyone has different feelings and opinions and it is important to respect this online
2. **Be aware of how your comments might be read:** Strong language, capital letters, and exclamation marks can be easily misinterpreted online
3. **Be careful with humour and sarcasm**
4. **Think about who can see what you have shared:** Privacy settings are a simple way to restrict who can see what you are sharing, but even with them in place nothing is ever truly private online.
5. **Take time to have a read of the rules of conduct/community standards**
6. **Be forgiving:** The online world can be very different from the offline world so try to be understanding of others when they struggle with online communication
7. **Watch your tone:** If you're not careful, you could easily come across as rude, angry or sarcastic, even when that's not your intention.
8. **Use emoticons - as appropriate:** Emotion icons, such as smiley faces, can help clarify your tone or intention.
9. **Be generous and collaborative:** Take the time to read and respond to other people's posts, and provide encouragement and information when you can.
10. **Use good grammar and spelling**
11. **Include media (pictures, videos, gifs):** It is more eye-catching than plain text and it invites more engagements

12. **Make use of hashtags:** Through the use of hashtags, the public can have a wider reach.
13. **Use Royalty-free pictures in your posts or communications materials** (pixabay.com, unsplash.com)

- **Don'ts**

1. **Use coarse, rough or rude language:** It's off-putting and unprofessional
2. **Overuse caps:** Many users interpret it as being yelled at or scold
3. **Rely on first person:** Using "I" when you talk in person is one thing, but when you do it too much online, it often comes across as self-centred, try using "we" or "you".
4. **Flame:** Presenting an informed opinion in a diplomatic way is acceptable; lashing out and forcing your preferences on others is not.
5. **Overuse abbreviations:** Using too many abbreviations can be irritating, not to mention confusing.

Tips and guidelines on how to create different posts for different target groups

- **How to reach parents:**

1. Acknowledge the difficulties of parenthood
2. Win on price and effectiveness
3. Though authenticity goes a long way, at the end of the day new parents care most about two critical factors when they shop: how much it costs and how well it works.
4. Building community is key
5. The early days of family life can be isolating, and many expecting and new parents turn to online communities to help.
6. Know who you're talking to
7. Provide support over video
8. Take advantage of texting
9. Texting allows people to read and respond to messages on their own schedule, without the disruption of a voice call.
10. Offer an Emotional Appeal

- **How to reach teachers:**

1. Define the personas you are trying to reach
2. Know where they go online

- a. Make sure you understand where your audience is spending their time. You don't want to spend all your effort on a social media platform your customers don't care about.
3. How-to Videos
 - a. A how-to video that clearly and succinctly describes a great classroom activity is like gold to teachers.
4. Make your content shareable
 - a. Educators like to share what they see on social media with their peers.
5. Consider the timing
 - a. Keep in mind that marketing to an educator in the summer, for the upcoming school year, may be too late. It's best to build awareness of new products throughout the winter. This allows teachers to research and understand your product and be ready to purchase when they get their budgets in the summer.

Useful tools

Here is a list of tools you might find useful for creating an event or the theme of an upcoming workshops for either parents, the children, or even your colleagues:

- [Mailchimp](#): creating and sending newsletters; creating landing pages for events; managing contact databases
- [Canva](#): simple, free, user-friendly graphic design software
- [Unsplash](#), [Pixabay](#), [Pexels](#): royalty-free images
- [Coolors](#): colour schemes generator
- [Flaticon](#): free vector icons
- [Freepik](#): free vectors, stock photos, PSD and icons
- [Hotemoji](#): emojis for your social media posts
- [Remove](#): to remove background from pictures

③ Step 3: Identify potential supporters

Having official project supporters who are willing to spread the word is an excellent, sustainable dissemination opportunity. ECEC staff together with leaders/heads School Teachers are the most valuable supporters as they are the ones to be educated, to educate others and to persuade school leaders to be part of the activities or initiatives of your kindergarten!

It is crucial to develop an invitation letter that you will be able to use and modify, in order to invite your relevant stakeholders to the event or activity you are organising.

First, you will need to ask yourselves “*What do I expect from the invitees?*”

Before contacting someone to ask them to become a supporter of a project or attend an event, we must carefully think about what we are asking them to be involved in. ECEC staff, ECEC heads and leaders, and parents of pre-school children will be among the first ones to be involved, but other powerful Ambassadors might also include

- Organisations active in the field of ECEC;
- ICT and media experts, journalists and stakeholders;
- Authorities;
- Members of NGOs/institutions.

Hence, once you have identified to which target audience you are organizing this event, activity, fund-raising, online seminar etc., you will need to devise the appropriate invitation letter to be sent via email, in order to properly invite your attendees.

Below you can find an example of an invitation letter that we used to inform the public about the EMBRACE project!

Feel free to use the template and modify it to fit your needs and target audience.

Dear [**potential supporter – ECEC staff-leader**],

The EMBRACE team would like to invite you to participate in a free-training course formed by four modules by means of which the development of a qualified workforce that can confidently meet the needs of all children with intellectual disability wishing to attend nurseries and kindergarten is acquired. Being aware of this issue is crucial as High-quality early childhood education and care (ECEC) is recognized as a foundation for successful lifelong learning, bringing not only specific developmental benefits to children but also compensating, to a degree, for other factors relating to disadvantage (Frawley, 2014).

The EMBRACE Erasmus+ European Project is a cooperation of 6 different organisations from 5 different countries. The co-ordinator of the project is Bielskie Stowarzyszenie Artystyczne Teatr Grodzki (Poland), in collaboration with Emphasys Centre (Cyprus), Regional Directorate for Primary and Secondary Education of Attica (Greece), Kentro Merimnas Oikogeneias Kai Paidiou (Greece), Family and Childcare Center – branch in Skopje (The Republic of North Macedonia) and European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (Belgium).

One of the main aims of the project is to contribute to the enhancement of the quality of early childhood education and care and promote the inclusion of children with intellectual disabilities.

You can visit the official website of the project at: <https://project-embrace.eu/> in order to learn more about the project.

Do you have any questions? Please do not hesitate to contact us, so that we can provide you with all the information you need.

We are looking forward to meeting you!

Kind regards,

[name of the organisation]

ANNEXES:

- ANNEX 1: FACTSHEETS**

FOSTERING INCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE (ECEC)

FACTSHEET 1

The EMBRACE Project aims to:

- To develop inclusive values and attitudes among ECEC educators.
- To equip ECEC staff and leaders with the needed tools and knowledge to foster a culture of inclusion.
- To raise awareness about the importance of inclusion of children with intellectual disabilities in ECEC.
- To increase the visibility of children with intellectual disabilities and deconstruct stereotypes.

Target Groups:

- Individuals working in ECEC settings i.e. educators, assistants
- Parents of pre-school children
- Organizations active in the field of ECEC

The Consortium:

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FACTSHEET 2

Project Results:

- PR1 – Transnational Report**
Development of a transnational report that provides a critical analysis of the opportunities for initial and continued education of ECEC staff on topics concerning inclusive ECEC of children with intellectual disabilities, the knowledge and skills gaps, and needs, concluding with policy recommendations.
- PR2 – E-Learning course**
Design, development and piloting of an e-learning course for ECEC staff, with a focus on strengthening their attitudes, knowledge, values, and skills that are central to ensuring that ECEC settings are welcoming and inclusive of children with intellectual disabilities.
- PR3 – Inclusion Handbook**
Design, development and piloting of a handbook for ECEC staff and leaders on fostering inclusive environments for children with intellectual disabilities through engaging and collaborating with colleagues, children, parents and other community members.
- PR4 – Awareness-raising Toolkit**
Design, development, and piloting of a toolkit for ECEC settings with useful and effective resources for raising awareness of the importance of inclusion of children with intellectual disabilities in early childhood education and care.

www.embrace-project.eu
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@embrace_erasmus

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CHAPTER 2: CHILDREN WITH AND WITHOUT INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

The promotional material is targeting two distinct audiences; adults and children. In this specific chapter, various educational materials such as posters, brochures and videos have been prepared to facilitate discussions and learning experiences for children with and without intellectual disabilities.

These materials address several significant themes such as sharing, inclusivity, diversity, and disability awareness. Through these resources, adults, including ECEC educators and parents will manage to cultivate a nurturing and inclusive classroom and/or home environment, through the promotion of empathy, encouragement of positive behavior, and understanding among the children.

Below you may find the poster and topics that have been developed with an attached link on the resources, in order for the audience to be able to download the materials directly.

Posters:

Poster 1:

1. "Sharing is caring" - promoting sharing and turn-taking skills



Description:

Often, with young children, it can be complicated to achieve an orderly and structured way of talking or taking turns in daily activities. On top of this, not all children are keen on sharing their objects/games with others, risking exclusion of some in the class. This turn-taking clock poster aims to introduce the concepts of taking turns and sharing to children, and how to wait and respect other's turns in the classroom. It is an opportunity for teachers to emphasise that everyone has a place in the classroom and is deserving of respect, and to discuss the emotions that can be related to this, and to foster understanding and empathy amongst the pupils.

How to use this poster:

There are several components to this poster which allow the teacher to conduct a class activity, which you can see in pages 2-3 of the poster. The arrow should be cut out and added to the clock. On the poster there are also some examples of activities where turns may be needed (playing, washing hands, eating, talking). These squared cards can be cut out and used for discussing children's emotions and activities where taking turns may be needed. Teachers can stick pictures or symbols representing each of the children in the class around the clock. Every child in the class can take a turn at spinning the arrow around the clock. Then it will be their turn to open up about the emotions and/or picture which the arrow lands on. This will teach children about taking turns, having to listen to one another, and wait patiently and respectfully.

Topics include:

- What is sharing and why is it important?
- Learning to take turns in games and activities
- Understanding feelings of others when sharing

Poster 2:**[2. How to make your classroom or school more inclusive](#)**

Description:

The aim of this poster is to show diversity and collaboration as positive elements in a class. Puzzles are a great way to show how things fit together, and that every individual piece is essential to create a whole. The different pictures show children of different origins and with and without disabilities playing and enjoying time together.

How to use this poster:

This poster can be used to decorate the class and to show positive examples of children enjoying time together, despite differences in abilities and origins. It may be used to start activities to discuss and highlight the different strengths that each child has and brings into the classroom. A possible activity could be based on the image at the top of the poster: the teacher can ask each child to reflect on their own “superpower”. Then everyone is invited to draw themselves as a superhero, inspired by the superpower they have chosen. Finally, all children get the chance to present their superhero to the class, others can ask questions if they want. The teacher can then highlight that we all have superpowers, even if some may seem more hidden than others.

Topics include:

- Promoting diversity and inclusion through classroom materials and activities
- Encouraging positive behaviour and communication
- Addressing the needs of all learners

Poster 3:

[3. Games and activities that promote inclusion and understanding of disabilities](#)

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The garden of friendship

This poster can be used for activities to promote inclusion and promotion of diversity in the classroom.

Here some examples of activities:

- Starting from the vegetables and insects in the poster explain how everyone is different but how each contributes to a nice colourful and healthy environment
- Ask questions to children on the characters in the poster, what are their colours, which one can live underground, which one can become food
- Ask and explain why each of them is important for the garden
- Ask children to identify their favourite character, ask why it is their favourite
- draw together with the children the class garden where each child is drawing him/herself as the character they have chosen.

THE CONSORTIUM

Emphasys EASPD kmQp kmQp

Description:

The aim of this poster is to initiate activities which promote inclusion and understanding of diversity in the classroom. A garden comprises a highly diverse, vibrant and dynamic ecosystem where each creature has a specific role. Likewise in the classroom every child brings its own unique value. It will show children that they are all important, and that their differences are enriching.

How to use this poster:

Some examples of activities which can be done using the poster as a starting point:

- Looking at the vegetables, fruits and insects on the poster, the teacher can explain how everyone is different but essential for the garden to thrive. Each component contributes to a nice colourful and healthy environment.
- The teacher can ask questions to the class about the different characters - plants and animals - in the poster; what are their colours? Where do they live? Which ones can become food? Afterwards, the teacher can explain to the children why each is important for the garden.
- The teacher starts by asking children to identify their favourite character in the poster and why it is their favourite. Then, these answers are used to create a new version of the class garden. Each child draws him/herself as the character they have chosen. They all do this together, on a big poster which can be hung up in class as a reminder of their unity and strength in diversity.

Topics include:

- Sensory activities that promote understanding of disabilities
- Games that promote teamwork and empathy
- Art activities that promote inclusivity and diversity

Brochures:

Brochure 1:

EMBRACE Differences: Learn about Intellectual Disabilities . Title: EMBRACE Differences: Learn about Intellectual Disabilities



Description:

Since children at this age can't read, the brochure can be used by an educator, a parent or an adult to discuss and present to the children the different kinds of disabilities. The brochure explains the differences in physical and sensory disabilities and gives advice on how to discuss about them and why it's important to teach children about differences and disabilities. The brochure includes some books that adults can read to the children and some tips on supporting and including children with disabilities. Lastly, it contains additional resources to learn more about Autism Spectrum Disorder and Down Syndrome.

How to use this brochure:

This brochure is the first step for opening the topic and the discussion. Educators, parents, guardians and other adults can use the brochure by reading some parts to children and gain access to additional resources to get ideas on how to discuss about disabilities with young children. It is written in a kid-friendly language and has additional resources.

Topics include:

- Books and activities to introduce young children to disabilities and foster empathy and understanding
- Tips for parents and caregivers on how to support children with disabilities in the classroom and at home
- Understanding and embracing differences: Teaching children about diversity and inclusion through disability awareness.

Brochure 2:

Celebrate Diversity: EMBRACE our beautiful differences Title: Celebrate Diversity: EMBRACE our beautiful differences



Description:

Parents, educators, guardians and adults can use this brochure with their children and students to learn about the differences and how to embrace them. It contains a number of movies and books that adults can read or watch with the children, activities about inclusivity

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and learning about differences and tips for parents and caregivers about starting the conversation and where to focus.

How to use this poster:

ECEC teachers, parents and guardians can use the brochure to gain access to activities, books and movies to show to the children and implement with the children to promote the importance of inclusion and how to celebrate diversity, no matter the kind.

Topics include:

- Cultivating empathy and kindness in children through multicultural literature and media
- Fun and engaging activities for children to learn about different cultures, traditions, and perspectives
- Tips for parents and caregivers on how to talk to children about race, ethnicity, and diversity in age-appropriate ways.

Brochure 3:

[Making our World Accessible: Creating an Inclusive Place for Everyone](#) Title: Making our World Accessible: Creating an Inclusive Place for Everyone



Description:

This brochure is an introduction to how we can make spaces welcoming for people with different needs. With the brochure, we can learn about the importance of accessibility and help us create an inclusive world! We come across many different barriers and it's important to help children break them and create an inclusive class for everyone!

How to use this poster:

The brochure can be used with an activity for presenting the different barriers that children might encounter in their lives. It can be the start as an introduction and then the adults/ECEC professionals or parents/guardians can implement an activity like role-playing or theatre to

discuss about a barrier that is present in their everyday lives and come up with solutions and how to break or overcome it.

Topics include:

- Exploring the different types of accessibility needs and how we can make spaces more inclusive for all
- Fun and interactive ways for children to learn about accessible design and engineering
- Inspiring stories of people with disabilities who have overcome barriers and made a positive impact on the world.

Additional materials – Educational Videos:**Video 1. [Celebrating diversity in our garden of friendship](#)****Description:**

This video is based on the Poster 3 of Chapter one called “Garden of Friendship”. It draws a parallel between the garden which is a rich and diverse environment, and the classroom which also is one. The video explains to the children the specific attributes of different vegetables, fruits and animals. Every example is then related back to children and their ECEC setting. It aims to bring attention to the fact that everyone in the class has different abilities and can contribute meaningfully to it. It also strives to show the importance of helping each other and collaborating to thrive.

How to use this video:

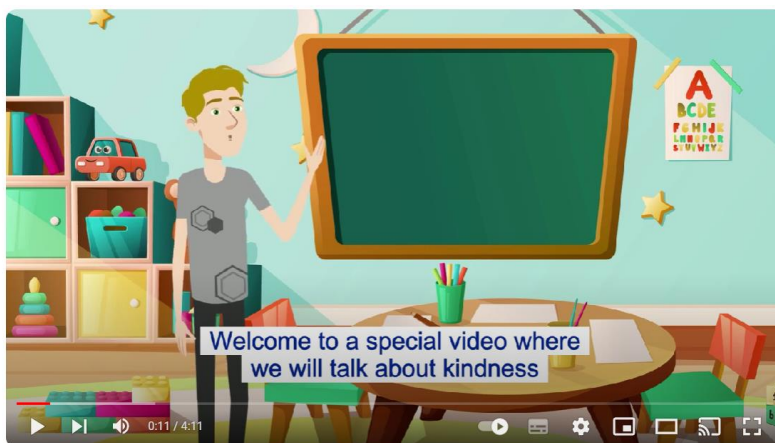
Teachers can use the video to introduce the values of empathy and understanding in the classroom. These are often abstract concepts which are hard to grasp, hence linking them to practical cases will help children better visualise their meaning. The video can be shown all in one go, or in parts, as it is quite long and dense. This will allow children to absorb the information better, if it is broken up by teacher-led interventions. After watching each part of

the video, the teacher can ask children what their main takeaways are and if they did not understand some things. Children can express which characters are their favourite in the video and why.

Topics analysed: Celebrating differences and embracing diversity

- Cultivating empathy and kindness in children through multicultural literature and media
- Fun and engaging activities for children to learn about different cultures, traditions, and perspectives
- Tips for parents and caregivers on how to talk to children about race, ethnicity, and diversity in age-appropriate ways.

Video 2. Embracing Differences: Including Friends with Intellectual Disabilities in Kindergarten



Description:

This is a video in Greek with subtitles in all languages showcasing to the children how they can be more inclusive and kind towards other children with special needs in the kindergarten. It summarises in a simple way what an intellectual disability is, what is inclusion and ways that children can make sure everyone is welcome and valued in the kindergarten.

How to use this video:

Since the video is in Greek, professionals or parents/guardians can show the video to the children and explain to them what it says. The video has subtitles so the adults can read them. At one point, it mentions the involvement of an adult to support the children in adapting the activities or games in order to be more inclusive. The adults can choose a typical activity or game and change or adapt the instructions/rules to include children with intellectual disabilities.

Topics analysed:

- What is an intellectual disability
- What is inclusion
- Tips for the children on how to be more inclusive and friendly towards others



CHAPTER 3: ADULTS AND PARENTS OF PRE-SCHOOL AGED CHILDREN

The promotional material is targeting two distinct audiences; adults and children. In this specific chapter, various educational materials such as posters, brochures and videos have been prepared to support adults, including ECEC educators, SEN teachers and parents to upgrade their knowledge, skills and attitudes, in order to be able to address and satisfy the needs of children with and without intellectual disabilities.

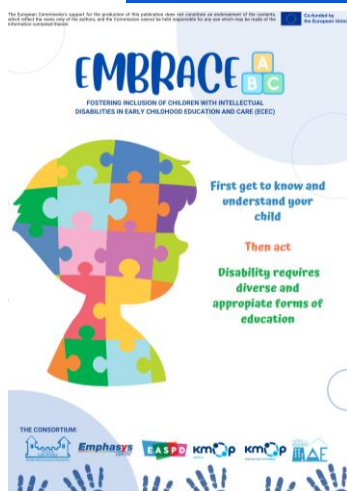
Specifically, through these products, the adult audience will be able to upgrade their knowledge and aid the integration and inclusion of children with intellectual disabilities within the kindergarten setting.

These materials address several significant themes such as adapting activities to include children with intellectual disabilities, building an inclusive environment, incorporating accessibility and sensory considerations, the role of peer support and mentorship in promoting inclusion, assistive technologies that help people with disabilities and many more. Through these resources, adults, including will manage to cultivate a nurturing and inclusive classroom and/or home environment, through the promotion of empathy, encouragement of positive behavior, and understanding among the children.

Below you may find the poster and topics that have been developed with an attached link on the resources, in order for the audience to be able to download the materials directly.

Posters:

[Poster 1:1. Strategies for adapting activities to include children with intellectual disabilities](#)



Description:

Slogan: First get to know and understand your child. Then act. Disability requires diverse and appropriate forms of education. The poster shows the outline of a child's head made up of puzzles. The head, as the symbolic centre of thought, will, perception of the world and at the same time the place where the inner world - the personality - is built. Emotions, intellect, moods, experiencing oneself and the world, perception, processing are just a few of the puzzles that make up the mind. They should all come together in a coherent and harmonious way, the poster says. This is what all those raising and educating a child should strive for. However, achieving this is not simple or easy, if only because we do not have direct insight into another person's mind. We use knowledge, intuition (Einfühlung, Husserl, Scheler, Stejn) , empathy, presumptions. To educate effectively, we need to understand the learner, get to the drivers of their behaviour. This is more difficult in the case of children with disabilities, intellectual impairments or developmental disabilities. To know and understand a child is to enter his or her inner world, to grasp the relationships within it. Shaping the child's mind requires a variety of means, and these must be chosen appropriately in order to realise the intended changes and development must be adequate, appropriate. The poster is intended to guide such a view of education. At its centre is the child. It is the responsibility of the adults (family, teachers, environment) to understand the child, to delve into the child's experiences, emotions, difficulties and to provide help. Help aimed at forming a harmonious personality.

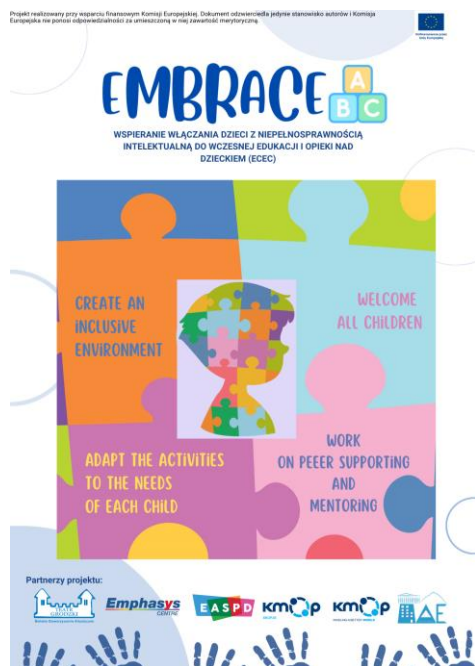
How to use this poster:

Presentation of the poster in kindergartens, parent boards, staff room. At meetings with parents, the poster can be used as a starter for discussions about inclusive education, educational work in this kindergarten. Reading the message contained in the poster together. Similarly, it can be used in training board meetings. Artwork independently creates a 'child's head' jigsaw puzzle with signing, giving colours (colours have their own symbolism and power). An attempt to capture a particular child, to capture the psychological factors responsible for his/her behaviour and their interrelationships.

Topics include:

- Understanding different types of intellectual disabilities and how they may impact a child's ability to participate in activities
- Adapting sports, games, and other recreational activities to make them accessible and enjoyable for children with intellectual disabilities
- Tips for parents, caregivers, and educators on how to create inclusive environments that support the needs of children with intellectual disabilities.

Poster 2: 2. Tips for creating an inclusive environment, including accessibility and sensory considerations



Description:

Slogans: Create an inclusive environment. Welcome all children to your home. Tailor activities to each child's needs. Work on peer support and mentoring. Child's head against a background of two layers of interlocking puzzles. The interactions, the learning resources, the teaching methods are presented as a jigsaw puzzle. These measures have to be interconnected, they have to form a coherent whole, they have to complement and complement each other. They are multi-layered just like the jigsaw puzzle shown. At the top are four slogans, guidelines or courses of action. This is worth doing because it produces results. Integration in Latin means renewal, nowadays it is the creation of a whole out of diverse elements, but in this context, it is also the renewal of strengthening children. In the case of education, it is about creating a group out of individual children. A group created in an inclusive atmosphere will itself be inclusive. Welcome all children to you is as much as taking every child under your wing, consequently take responsibility and educate all children. Tailor activities to the needs of each child, this is another formulation of the principle of individualising teaching and education. Work on peer support and mentoring. In an integrated group, children will naturally give each other information, support and share experiences. Helping, sharing experiences and, above all, kind contact and support from a colleague strengthens the one receiving help and the one giving help. It builds a bond, the poster shows what to do, what to create and build, so that the jigsaw puzzle "in the head" of the child comes together harmoniously. The suggestions apply to working with able-bodied children, children with disabilities and mixed groups. It is an example of universal design.

How to use this poster:

The poster is aimed at adults, especially teachers, parents of people in the child's environment or kindergarten. It can be displayed in educational establishments, at festivals, marches etc. Training sessions of teachers' councils and meetings with parents are also appropriate places. The poster can be discussed together and the educational measures used in the kindergarten can be discussed. It can also be used in training workshops as a start and inspiration for art activities. Create hexahedrons, sign the walls with suggestions or other educational measures presented on the poster, include the effect of the educational measures in the lettering and create a multi-layered spatial form from it.

Topics include:

- Universal design for learning: Adapting teaching methods and materials to meet the needs of all learners, including those with disabilities
- Strategies for making classrooms and learning spaces more accessible and accommodating for students with sensory disabilities
- Tips for creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for students with disabilities, including physical, sensory, and intellectual disabilities.

Poster 3: [3. The role of peer support and mentorship in promoting inclusion](#)



Description:

The poster shows a group of children (a person without a disability and a person with a disability) and an adult. Together they are building a structure out of blocks, perhaps a city. The poster shows that a community of people with different needs also with different learning needs is possible. A common goal integrates people, triggers joint actions. New forms of education, but also the use of old ones are needed to bring them about; building blocks are an old invention. Setting a game, a goal for an activity in an inclusive atmosphere increases the activity of all participants, facilitates communication in the determination of the goal, and the materials needed. It contributes to the smooth and concerted implementation of the idea. People who are open to diversity and who have worked in an integrated group are better prepared to build a society permeated by inclusive relationships. The poster shows one way of building integration of different groups of people. It is joint, purposefully organised action.

How to use this poster:

Exposure of the poster in the kindergarten, its surroundings, marches at parent meetings and at training sessions of the educational councils. Self-discussion and discussion will reveal people's attitudes towards the proposed activities, their knowledge and self-reflection will increase. It is possible to create group work on the basis of posters, the group's task will be to present the activity with the objective, how it is to be created and what to do with it.

Topics include:

- Creating peer support programs for students with disabilities to foster social connections and build self-esteem
- The benefits of mentorship for students with disabilities, including academic, social, and emotional support
- Strategies for promoting inclusive leadership and mentorship opportunities for students with disabilities in extracurricular activities and community organisations

Brochures:

Brochure 1:

1. Assistive technologies that help people with disabilities



Description:

The brochure is aimed for adults, especially ECEC staff, head of educational institutions and parents of children with disabilities and typical development to raise awareness of the importance of assistive technologies in today's world. It provides a brief introduction about the importance of using assistive technologies to support people with disabilities, including text-to-speech systems using Optical Character Recognition (OCR), Braille display and screen reading software.

How to use this brochure:

The brochure can be used during trainings and workshops aimed to further support the professional development of ECEC staff. Moreover, during meetings with parents it can be used as a valuable source of information about the assistive technologies and to motivate them to further explore this topic.

Topics include:

- Overview of different types of assistive technologies, including those for physical, sensory, and cognitive disabilities
- Practical examples of how assistive technologies can improve accessibility and support independence for individuals with disabilities
- Strategies for selecting and implementing assistive technologies in education, employment, and daily living contexts.

Brochure 2:

[2. How to promote empathy for children and respect towards others who have disabilities](#)



Description:

The brochure provides an overview of nurturing empathy towards children with disabilities by understanding their needs and difficulties and how to overcome them. It gives a brief introduction about empathy and how to develop a strategy to promote empathy and foster inclusive educational environment where every child can thrive.

How to use this brochure:

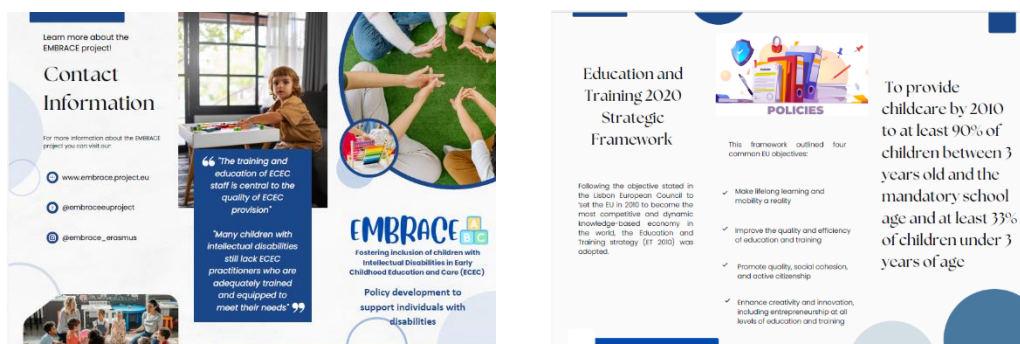
The brochure primary targets ECEC staff and parents of children without disabilities and supports them to teach the children without disabilities to understand and help their peers with disabilities in their every day life, especially in the classroom. It can be used during professional trainings of ECEC staff and regular meetings, workshops and dissemination activities with parents of children.

Topics include:

- Tips for promoting empathy and respect towards individuals with disabilities through classroom activities and discussions
- Strategies for addressing bullying and discrimination against individuals with disabilities in schools and communities
- The role of disability awareness and education in promoting empathy, respect, and inclusion for individuals with disabilities.

Brochure 3:

[3. Advocating for inclusive policies and practices in schools and other community settings](#)



Description:

In order to achieve an inclusive education system, the decision-makers and stakeholders needs to make sure that we have a well-developed schools based upon 'a child-centered pedagogy' that is capable of successfully educating all children, including those with severe disadvantages and

disabilities. The brochure provides an overview on European policy on inclusive education and Quality Framework for early childhood development and care.

How to use this brochure:

The brochure primary targets decision-makers, Head of educational institutions and ECEC staff. It can be used as a resource during training or workshops and dissemination activities with the target group to empower their knowledge and skills.

Topics include:

- Advocating for disability rights and accommodations in schools and other community settings
- Strategies for building coalitions and collaborating with stakeholders to promote inclusive policies and practices
- The importance of data-driven advocacy and policy development to support individuals with disabilities and their families

Additional materials – Educational Videos:

Video 3. [Promoting empathy towards children with intellectual disabilities](#)



Description:

The videos provide an information how to develop a strategy to promote empathy towards children with disabilities and empowering ECEC staff. It presents strategies for building an inclusive classroom, as well as emphasized the need of continuous support and education of ECEC staff and parents.

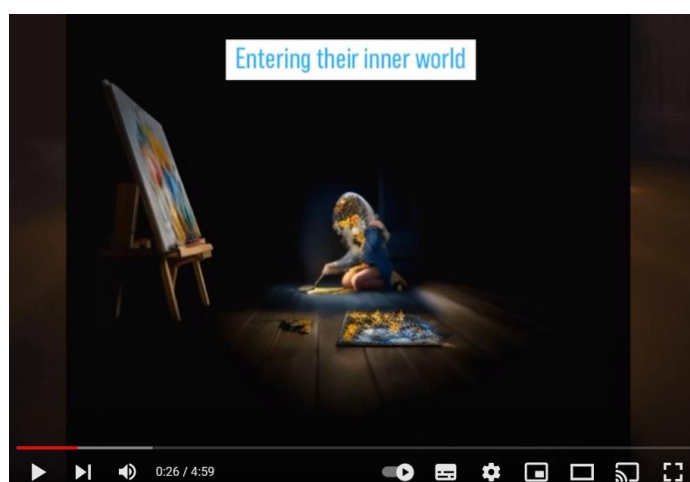
How to use this video:

The video can be used as a source of information on the topic of empathy and how ECEC staff can support the process of establishment of inclusive environment where every child thrives.

Topics analysed:

- Tips for promoting empathy and respect towards individuals with disabilities through classroom activities and discussions
- Strategies for addressing bullying and discrimination against individuals with disabilities in schools and communities
- The role of disability awareness and education in promoting empathy, respect, and inclusion for individuals with disabilities.

Video 4. [The idea of inclusive education](#)



Description:

The film is linked to the brochure 3 Making Our World Accessible: The importance of accessibility in creating an inclusive environment and to the posters: Poster 1, Strategies for adapting activities to include children with intellectual disabilities, Poster 2, Tips for creating an inclusive environment, including accessibility and sensory considerations. The film is primarily aimed at teachers. It indicates methods and means of action, draws attention to the particularly constructed inner world of children with disabilities, the need to delve into it in order to understand the child. It encourages action for the sake of the children's well-being, everyday action, deeds and not a multiplication of words.

How to use this video:

The film can be shown at training board meetings, meetings with parents and also meetings with policy makers. The discussion triggered by the film, when well led, will allow discussion of adult attitudes towards children and inclusive education.

Topics analysed:

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- Methods and actions that teachers should take for the inclusion of children with intellectual disabilities
- Activities and exercises

SUMMARY OF THE TOOLKIT

The Awareness Raising Toolkit is a vital initiative designed to transform early childhood education and care by promoting the inclusion of children with intellectual disabilities. By addressing misconceptions and prejudices, this project aims to create a more empathetic and inclusive community culture. The toolkit offers valuable resources for both young children and adults, fostering positive attitudes and behaviors. Ultimately, its widespread dissemination ensures that it will reach a broad audience, enabling its impact to extend far beyond its initial scope. With this toolkit freely available in multiple languages, the project not only serves its partner countries but also contributes to the broader European effort to create inclusive and supportive environments where every child can flourish and reach their full potential.

In addition to its dissemination through various channels, this project embodies a collaborative effort across multiple European countries. It brings together the expertise and insights of educators, child development specialists, parents, and advocates for children with intellectual disabilities. Furthermore, to ensure that the toolkit is accessible to a wider audience, it will be available not only in English but also in Macedonian, Polish, and Greek. This multi-language approach is a testament to the project's commitment to inclusivity on all fronts, ensuring that educators, parents, and communities across various linguistic backgrounds can benefit from its valuable resources.

As we move forward, the project's overarching goal remains clear: to break down barriers and create an educational landscape where children with intellectual disabilities are fully embraced and empowered to thrive. By equipping nurseries, kindergartens, parents, and communities with the tools and knowledge to champion inclusion, this project is a significant step towards a more inclusive and compassionate society, where every child's potential is nurtured and celebrated.

You can find all of the [promotional materials](#) in the website of the [EMBRACE PROJECT!](#)

