

GAMES4TOLERANCE - BULLYING PREVENTION USING GAMIFICATION

Bullying in schools is unfortunately an ever-present topic that is moving among younger and younger children and from a face-to-face contact into the virtual space. In the school environment, there are, of course, methods of detecting bullying and recommendations on how to deal with it. But we also know that teachers are overburdened by all the roles and demands that their position places on them, so they cannot all be experts on bullying. That's why we consider bullying prevention to be crucial. In our project we provide inspiration for teachers and educators on how to work with a group to prevent bullying through interesting activities based on the principles of gamification and through creation of their own games.

Benefits in correlating gamification and bullying prevention

Gamification is one of the modern methods used across different sectors, including education. Gamification, games, the gaming approach and the outcomes of their use in development and learning inspired the idea of correlating them with bullying prevention.

The term gamification refers to the use of gaming methods in a non-gaming environment. The purpose of incorporating gamification and gaming elements into a non-gaming environment is primarily to increase motivation and interest of learners in the subject matter that is presented in this way.

Nowadays, there is an increasing emphasis on the positive impact of gamification and its integration as a teaching tool into the educational system, whether in nursery, primary or secondary schools. It is used as an important motivational factor or to promote group dynamics. These games support social climate in the classroom, empathy, social skills and competences.

If a game is included in the educational process, we speak of a didactic game. The difference between didactic games and other games lies in the presence of follow-up evaluation, feedback, communication about the game experience. Didactic game then has a common element with experiential pedagogy, namely the use of real-life situations.

Through games and similar activities, experience education evokes authentic experiences and further works with them. It simulates processes, relationships, influences and show their interrelationship and the consequences of such actions. By comparing self-perception and feedback from others, the individual better charts a path to self-awareness, identity and authenticity.

Thanks to the proven methodology, positive experiences of trainers and participants, and the targeted areas impacted by games in the educational process, the involvement of gamification in bullying prevention appears to be very beneficial.

What the T-Games project brings and for whom it is intended

The T-Games project was set up in the framework of the Erasmus+ call. Together with partners we are developing easy-to-apply and user-friendly tools and games for the target group of children aged 4-10. The game activities, partly developed during a joint 5-day training session (7/2021) and partly within the partners' national teams, will be used to create and share a free database.

The project also includes the creation of a methodological manual for teachers and educators from kindergartens and primary schools to support them in creating their own games and game activities that contribute to the prevention of bullying. The methodology manual is also part of the project's outputs and will be available to public.

In order to link the topics of bullying and gamification in a meaningful way, the methodology first offers a brief insight into the issue of bullying as an important part of pre-school and school education. Furthermore, there is a chapter about the use of gamification and game design in education. On a practical level, we provide guidance on how to create your own games and activities to support bullying prevention.

Bullying is never just an individual problem, but always a problem of the whole group and negatively affects its social development. For this reason, we focus primarily on specific activities and group work. This includes also reflection on the experienced activities, which is an important part necessary to achieve educational goals. In the section on this topic, we discuss the principles of facilitation, the recommended structure and techniques for

reflection with the group. The final topic briefly discusses rituals and their use in bullying prevention and group activities.

In addition to the methodological and theoretical sections, you will find practical tips in the handbook, e.g. links to inspirational videos. There are also interesting facts and additional information in the category Did you know... and a Reflection section. The latter contains questions that you should ask yourself before doing the practical activities, or to make up your opinion on some difficult topics or to reflect on a particular chapter.

More information about the project, the outputs and their availability can be found at <http://misehero.cz/t-games/>.