



Child-friendly communication in war context

CP4Europe Webinar on

“Child-friendly communication in crisis situations”



Building a Europe
for and with children
Construire une Europe
pour et avec les enfants

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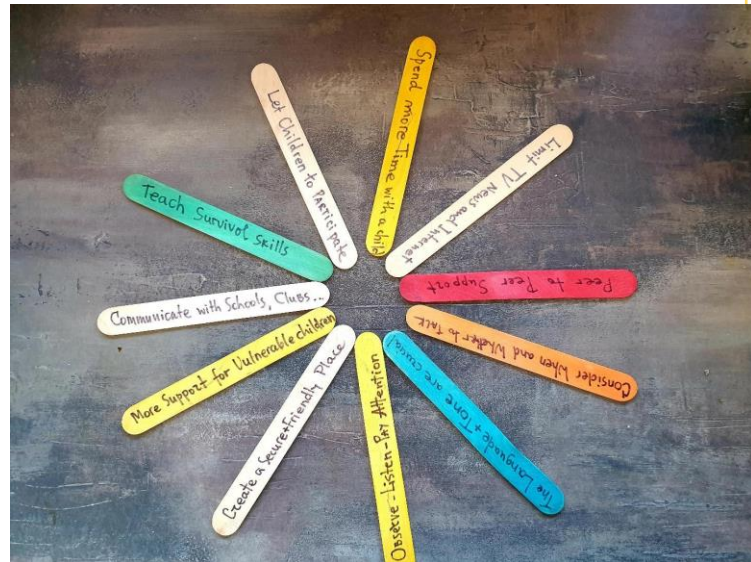
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Stay Honest but Child-Friendly

How?

- Observe, Listen, Pay attention to changes in the behaviour of every child.
- Consider when and whether it is appropriate to start a conversation with children about the war/crisis.
- Create a secure and friendly environment.
- The language is important, the tone is important!
- Prepare in advance what you want to say to the children.
- Children are influenced by other children. Peer to peer support.
- Limit the viewing of news on TV or on the Internet.
- Spend more time with children.
- Teach children the techniques of surviving.
- Involve children to express opinions and participate actively.
- Keep in touch with the child's school, clubs.
- More support is needed for children with intellectual disabilities and/or autism.



How to communicate with children with intellectual disabilities?



- **More support is needed for children with intellectual disabilities and/or autism.**
- **Support specialists who work with children with disabilities**

- Prepare the children in advance with examples/patterns from their favourite fairy tales, films, characters, where the topics are about good , evil, struggle, battles, death are present.
- Practice as a game with children and adults survival skills and procedures. Create a habit of this, without panic and tension. Prepare who exactly will take children out in wheelchairs, difficult to move or with intellectual disabilities.
- Define evacuation keywords, audio, videos (music, fairy tales, movies), devices, headphones to help children with anxiety, on the autism spectrum, if the environment changes. The sound of sirens, for example, is extremely influential to this group of children and can trigger a crisis. It's good to be played in games so there's a habit.
- Monitor the children's games – is there tension, violence. Encourage them to openly share their emotions, to speak in their own words, listen patiently. Look for the group effect, peer to peer support.
- Monitor the behaviour, but also the condition of the child's skin. Often stress is manifested by skin problems.
- Build trust, sense of safety, stability, support, use physical closeness /hand in hand, hugging/ as needed.
- Have preliminary preparation before the news with short, simplified information. Let this not happen before sleep or overwork of children.
- It is important that everything has structure, order, predictability, preparation!

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Child-friendly communication in crisis/war situations



Recommendations

- ❖ Adults' role and responsibility is to lead in challenging times.
- ❖ Create a secure and friendly environment for talking to children: place, extra time, approach, language, tone, attitude, mutual dialogue and listening. There's no one size fits all.
- ❖ Schools are a key actor to inform properly, to teach activism, critical thinking and values and practical advice how to survive in crisis/ war situations.
- ❖ Teach children the techniques of disaster survival and war. This can be done through outdoor games or playing survival steps.
- ❖ Give opportunities for children to react by their own ways and support their peers, so they feel they are part of the solutions.
- ❖ Limit the access to social media, TikTok, TV news...
- ❖ Manage your own stress. Children are sensitive to adults' reactions.
- ❖ Focus on positive examples of support, solidarity and human collaboration against the war.



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Thank you for your attention

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