DO YOU WANT TO PLAY WITH ME?
Didactic games for children's wellbeing

Lucia Castelli - Giovanni Galli - Cristina Terribili - Elena Locatelli - Anne Devreux - Mariella Bombardieri
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INTRODUCTION

AVSI is an international non-governmental organisation (NGO) with a long history and experience in supporting human development. Founded in Italy in 1972, AVSI is actively present in 39 countries throughout Africa, Latin America, Middle East and Eastern Europe. Inspired by Social Catholic Teachings, with a particular attention to the education and promotion of human dignity in all its expressions, AVSI’s intervention methodology develops according to 5 basic points:

- Centrality of the person: The person is the center and the goal of any development program.
- Starting from the positive: each person, each community, in spite of its weaknesses, represents a richness to be enhanced.
- Doing with: starting from the relationship with the people to whom the project is targeted and building with them.
- Subsidiarity: decisions must be taken according to the citizens.
- Partnership: establishing solid and fertile partnerships with local administrations, basic associations and entities within society.

For several years, AVSI has elaborated publications to collect experiences and good working methods. Every manual was written according to the experiences on the ground by those staff and volunteers who accepted the challenge to promote human development even in the most desperate situations. Even in emergency situations, AVSI’s method of work goes beyond the logic of medicalization and psychology, towards enhancing the human dignity of men, women and children by helping them to recover their daily activities and find again the sense of life and of themselves as people.

For every child, recovering his normal daily life first of all means going back to school, to his family and to his community. Living his every day life means above all having the chance to play.

The importance of play is also recognised by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as an activity of prevention of every kind of exploitation¹. Several authors dealt with playing during different ages: Plato reminds us of the usefulness of play; Thomas Aquinas considers playing as a good in and of itself; during the Renaissance playing was considered an essential moment in the life of children. In 1942, Winnicott in his “The need of Playing” gives the following reasons: we play for pleasure, to free our aggressiveness in a known place, to manage anxiety, to favour the process of integration of our personality, to communicate our inner reality.

¹ Article 31 states: Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts. See also articles 32-36.
Playing is enjoying, laughing, discussing, communicating, arguing, establishing strategies: it is an experience of life that forms part of an individual’s education. Play generates enthusiasm and offers a marvellous occasion to donate the best of oneself, simply for pleasure. It makes us discover an important kind of freedom: that is to undertake an occupation completely gratuitously, with no other purpose than the pleasure of the game. In order to be started and led well, a game only needs the players’ good will. This leads us to another essential aspect: the commitment. The game is defined by a rule that gives it its sense. Yet, the player won’t have to accept such rules in a purely formal way, but instead he will have to deeply agree with the spirit of the game. This is the heart of the mystery: agreeing to be channeled into rules, the player will enjoy a pleasure shared with his friends in terms of emotions, feelings and thoughts as well as in all their capabilities of expression.

Playing is important because it allows those who are in periods of growth the opportunity to test and explore their skills, while avoiding the risk that such challenges are faced like extreme or threatening situations. Through games, the individual can face and respect his own fears, skills, and solitude, rather than avoiding these things which could end up dominating his life.

When children are excluded from a game for different reasons, they are deprived of a source of relationship and training that they have the right to. The lack of opportunities for play influences their emotional and psychological development and their growing process. It is important to support every occasion for play, both free and organised, that favours exploration, choice, recovery, manipulation of different materials, and imagination. Through imagination, children develop their understanding of the happenings of the real world.

While playing it is possible to develop the knowledge of the self, of one’s body and value, in a general meaning of the term. While playing, children can express the dramatic situations they have faced in life, and in this case, playing offers them different ways of self expression and communication.

The games described in this manual will allow children to strengthen their life-skills at the same time as they will help adults get to know children better and relate with them. The chapters and the included games follow one another and allow for a progressive deepening of relationships and comprehension. They are:

- Ice-Breaker Games (to introduce and get to know each other) (ch.1)
- Games of activation and physical contact (to perceive the other, who is our neighbor, as something that gives us pleasure and which does not threaten us) (ch.2),
Games of cooperation (to get accustomed to exchange and the construction of synergies) (ch.3)
Games to discovery your identity (ch.4)
Enhancement games (to enhance your-self and the reality, to mark the importance of thinking positive) (ch.5)
Games of communication and listening (ch.6)
Games of trust and comprehension (to understand better your-self and the others) (ch.7)
Games to express emotions (ch.8),
Games to manage aggressiveness (to control and reduce anger and aggressiveness) (ch.9),
Games to solve conflicts (ch.10).

To play, you have to be equipped with the following: basic instructions, the number of participants, the required time and place, and the necessary material. You also have to know the reasons for playing, meaning the qualities the game allows participants to practice. The adult's role in the game consists of reassuring, supporting, and helping the child understand the game and his potential.
In every chapter there is an introduction to outline the goals of the games included and their importance for child wellness. In addition, we propose some questions to ask at the end of each game to allow the participants to understand the goal of the game and to provide the trainer with feedback from the group.
For each game we indicate the goal, number of players, age, time and necessary material, and we described in a simple manner how to execute the game.
The different games can be practised with the children led by teachers in the classroom, or by facilitators during their free time, or as well with adults during a training course.
The child needs to be recognised and to introduce himself to let other people know him. Often in our job, children are listed as orphans or homeless, ill or difficult children, and they lose a part of their identity due to these labels. Children can be recognised first of all through their names. The child can begin to feel part of a group, but also to recognise himself as unique in the group because this recognises his identity.

The first approach to an individual child is important in order to create an essential relationship that allows for listening and an understanding of the problems and needs. It is possible to “break the ice” with the child using several games and activities. To engage the youths in an activity, make sure the meetings and activities begin in an amusing way. During a training, these games can be used to create or recover harmony in the group.

At the end of each game we can ask one or more of these questions, to allow the participants to take conscience about the reason of the game and the trainer to receive a feedback by the group:

- Why have we played this game?
- How do you feel at the end of the game?
- What have you thought during the game?
- What did you find easy?
- What did you find difficult?
- Do you think you will ever use this game again in your life?
- When and how?
1.1 THE CANDIES GAME

Age: 6 years and older
Number of players: maximum 30
Time: maximum 30 min
Materials: several candies (according to the number of participant)

Each player gets as many candies as he wants. When everybody has chosen, the facilitator invites everyone to introduce himself saying as many qualities as the number of candies he chose.

A good way to start playing with a new group. The game promotes the knowledge among participants and increases self-esteem.
1.2 JUGGLING WITH THE BALL

Age: 6 years and older
Number of players: minimum 6
Time: 5-10 min
Materials: one ball

It's useful to know each other and start to work in a team.

EXPLANATION

Take the ball and form a circle. Each player has to say something good about himself starting with: I have..., I can..., I am... and throw the ball to another person in the circle who will say something about himself. The game continues until everybody receives and throws the ball to someone else.
1.3 MUTUAL INTRODUCTION

Age: 10 years and older
Number of players: minimum 5-10
Time: 15 min
Materials: none

Form a circle. Each person says his name using an adjective starting with the same letter his name begins with. The words must refer to good qualities. For example: “I am Bernard the brave”, “I am Alice the amusing”, “I am Olivia the optimist”. Alternative: make the children sit in couples. Give them 5 minutes to talk about themselves (what they like, what they do best, what they don’t like, their dreams, etc...). After 5 minutes they come back in circle. Each person will introduce who’s near in the circle. Example: “He is Nelson... he lives with his two brothers and his sister. He likes playing football...”

GOAL OF THE GAME
This exercise allows everybody to feel good in his shoes receiving respect and attention by the others.
1.4 THE COMPLEMENTARY COLOURS

**GOAL OF THE GAME**

Actually feel that complementarity can be practised in different ways; introducing flexibility and dynamism in the articulation of a group. This game can also be used to form different teams.

**EXPLANATION**

Prepare an amount of coloured cartons. The total number of cartons will correspond to the number of players but it will be divided into 2, 3...6 colours. The players begin to draw by lot one carton. Then they move occupying the entire room available holding their cartons. When the facilitator gives the signal, they will gather according to the colour of their cartons, as fast as possible, they'll form groups of 3, showing the 3 colours. The facilitator can shout the colours that must be put together (ex: brown, green, blue!) or as well say: “separate each colour!”. Then, the players will form 3 circles with only one colour represented in each circle.

**Age:** 10 years and older  
**Number of players:** minimum 10  
**Time:** 15 min  
**Materials:** coloured cartons at least three different colours
**1.5 GREETING THE OTHERS**

**Age:** 5-6 years and older  
**Number of players:** maximum 30  
**Time:** maximum 30 min  
**Material:** nothing

**EXPLANATION**

Ask the players to greet using different gestures or verbal expressions, according to other cultures. (ex. How do people greet in China or in India?)  
If the players don’t know different expressions, the facilitator can make some examples and ask them to repeat those gestures or those words.

**GOAL OF THE GAME**

To encourage meeting among different cultures using different gestures or verbal expressions according to the different cultures.
There are many useful games that help to build friendship among the members of a group and help participants to focus, but also to become aware of the room surrounding us and to reflect about the ways of filling the room and relating to the others. The games described in this chapter allow children to understand and strengthen their bodies, to coordinate and control their movements, to appreciate the state of tension and relaxation of their muscles. These games favour physical contact and allow us to reflect on how we perceive the presence of the other when he is close and when he is far from us. This can help children to recognise differences and to respect others. In most of the games in this chapter, the amusement is complete when we synchronize with others, respecting their time and paying attention as well to those surrounding us, instead of only to ourselves. Such games also help nurture attention span, memory and speed of reflexes.

At the end of each game we can ask one or more of these questions, to allow the participants to take conscience about the reason of the game and the trainer to receive a feedback by the group:

- Why have we played this game?
- How do you feel at the end of the game?
- What have you thought during the game?
- What did you find easy?
- What did you find difficult?
- Do you think you will ever use this game again in your life?
- When and how?
2.1 TOUCH BLUE

Age: 6 years and older
Number of players: minimum 5
Time: 5-10 min
Material: none

EXPLANATION

Someone beats a drum while the others run in a circle. When the drum stops beating, the facilitator shouts: “touch blue!” or “touch your nose!” or “the floor” or some other colour or yet something on the players’ clothes (change instructions at any moment). Everybody has to touch this colour or the object chosen that must be on someone else and not on himself. Afterwards the drum beats again.

GOAL OF THE GAME

Allow to know each other, move, create a good climate in the group.
**2.2 BEAT THE SHOULDER**

**GOAL OF THE GAME**

Move, create a good climate in the group, focus.

**EXPLANATION**

Everybody stays in a circle, back towards back. One person walks around the circle and touches somebody's shoulder keeping walking fast around the circle. The one been touched has to leave his place and run on the opposite direction of the one who has touched him. The two players try to occupy the left empty place in the circle by the one touched. When the players meet in the middle around the circle, they shake their hands, say “good morning” and then keep running towards the empty place. The person left out has to walk around the circle and touch someone else's shoulder and so on.

**Age**: 6 years and older  
**Number of players**: minimum 5-10  
**Time**: 15 min  
**Material**: none
Age: 6 years and older  
Number of players: minimum 15 (5 per group)  
Time: 15 min  
Material: none

The players are divided into groups. The facilitator asks the groups to dispose in single file according to different things. Ex. According to their height, eyes’ colour from the clearest to the darkest, hair’s length, date of birth from the youngest to the elder etc.

Goal of the game: Develop cohesiveness and amusement.
**2.4 BAG FULL, BAG EMPTY**

*GOAL OF THE GAME*
Move, have fun, focus.

*EXPLANATION*
Each person represents a flour sack that can be full, half full or empty. When the facilitator says "full sack!" everybody has to stand up with his hands up, when he says "half full sack!" everybody kneels on the floor, when he says "empty sack!" everybody lies down.

*Age*: 6 years and older  
(Number of players: minimum 10)  
(Time: 5 min)  
(Material: none)
**2.5 INFLATE THE BALLOON**

**GOAL OF THE GAME**

Move, take conscience of the breathing act, relax, follow simple rules, cooperate.

**EXPLANATION**

Holding each other’s hands, form a circle and direct towards the imaginary centre in order to get in contact with the others. Underline it is necessary to hold your companion’s hand. In this position it is like a deflated balloon. Then the whole group breathes in and breathes out, the circle dilates till the maximum arms’ extension. Create the effect of an explosion saying: “Buum!”. The players throw themselves on the floor.

**SPECIFICATIONS**

- **Age**: 6 years and older
- **Number of players**: minimum 10
- **Time**: 5-10 min
- **Material**: none
GOAL OF THE GAME

Move, relax, coordinate senses, breathe and movements.

EXPLANATION

Ask everybody to stand on their place. When the facilitator says: “rain”, all the players clap their hands or make noise. When he says: “wind”, everybody shakes his hands over his head and says “woooaaaaaa”. When he says: “storm”, everybody makes noise with his feet and shakes his hands over his head. When he says: “sun”, everybody lows softly his arms under his head forming a circle and saying “ahhhh”.

AGE : 6 years and older
NUMBER OF PLAYERS : minimum 10
TIME : 5 min
MATERIAL: none
2.7 CATCH A FINGER

Age: 6 years and older
Number of players: minimum 10
Time: 10 min
Material: none

The players form a circle. Each person stands with the palm of his right hand up and a finger of his left hand pointed under his left partner’s opened hand. The facilitator placed in the centre of the circle counts: one, two, three. At three you must try to catch the finger placed under your right hand before your companion withdraws his hand. At the same time try not to let your next partner catch your finger. Try a few times then change hand.

Get the attention of the group and channel the energy of a group too excited to focus.
**GOAL OF THE GAME**

Stimulate attention, focus.

**EXPLANATION**

The facilitator asks the participants to count.
When a player has to say a figure containing “3” or being multiple of “3” he has to say “boom” instead of the figure. Who goes wrong gets out of the game till there’s a winner.

**2.8 MULTIPLE OF 3**

Age: 10 years and older  
Number of players: minimum 5-10  
Time: 15 min  
Material: none
2.9 THE JEALOUS MUM

Age: 10 years and older
Number of players: minimum 9 (the number of players must be odd)
Time: 10 min
Material: an amount of chairs as much as the half of the players’ number

The facilitator sets the chair in a circle. Half of the participants (called mums) goes behind each chair keeping their hands behind their back, the other half (called the children) sits on the chairs except one that must be left free. The mum behind the free chair has to try and “get another mum’s child” winking at him. The child who the mum winks at must try and run onto the free chair, but if “his mum” touches him, he can not move.

Get the attention of the group and channel the energy of a group too excited to focus.
2.10 THE CAT AND THE MOUSE

Age: 10 years and older
Number of players: minimum 10
Time: 15 min;
Material: none

The group forms a circle and each player holds his near partner’s hand. Two participants must be volunteers to play the cat and the mouse. The cat stays out of the circle while the mouse stays inside of the circle. The cat tries to get the mouse running around the circle and attempting to enter. The other players try to protect the mouse. So, when the cat succeeds in entering the circle, the players release the mouse while trying to keep the cat inside without breaking the chain formed by the circle. When the cat gets the mouse, two more players play these two roles.

Move, have fun, understand that the community can support the most weak.
3. GAMES OF COOPERATION

Cooperation—helping, sharing and reciprocity—is a pro-social behaviour that allows us to live with our needs and the needs of others, yet requires the ability to realize the needs of others (empathy), to set aside your own interests (generosity) and take action (initiative) creatively according to the needs expressed by others. These games are useful to understand collaboration and to get used to exchanging, sharing and constructing synergies with others. Such skills are the base for friendship. In games of cooperation there are no winners or losers. Instead, every participant's skills and characteristics are needed in order to reach the goal of the game. Such games allow for the inclusion of those children who during competition games could be excluded (like handicapped children).

At the end of each game we can ask one or more of these questions, to allow the participants to gain awareness about the reason of the game and the trainer to receive feed-back from the group:

- Why have we played this game?
- How do you feel at the end of the game?
- What have you thought during the game?
- Which is the thing you’ve liked most?
- What did you find easy?
- What did you find difficult?
- Do you think you will ever use this game again in your life?
- When and how?
3.1 CROSS THE RIVER

Age: 6 years and older
Number of players: minimum 10
Time: 5-10 min
Material: 10 m rope

EXPLANATION

Two volunteers get the rope, go away from each other and move the rope acting like waves of a river, slowly at first and then faster acting like bigger waves. The players, in group of 5 align and holding each others’ hand, have to jump above the rope all together without touching it. The group whose even one participant touches the rope is eliminated.

GOAL OF THE GAME

Work together, find solutions and get together to win.
3.2 JUMP IN, JUMP OUT

Age: 6 years and older
Number of players: minimum 10
Time: 5-10 min
Material: 5-10 m. rope

The facilitator asks the players to form a circle. The players unroll a rope and they pass it to one another. When the rope has passed in each player’s hand, it must be laid down forming a circle. Everybody has to be out of the circle. The facilitator starts the game shouting: “jump in”. So everybody jumps in the circle. Then the facilitator shouts “jump out” and everybody jumps out of the circle. The facilitator keeps shouting such orders. Besides, he may shout “jump in, jump in”.

At this point, all those who jump out have to retreat. The game goes on until only one is left in the circle or when the facilitator thinks the players have received enough energy.

GOAL OF THE GAME

Work together, create familiarity in the group, give some energy back to a tired group.
**GOAL OF THE GAME**

Move, improve body contact, have fun.

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**EXPLANATION**

The players are in couples and start dancing. When the facilitator says “coca” they change partner, when he says “soda” they stop and when he says “cha cha cha” they have to jump.

**3.3 COCA, SODA AND CHA CHA CHA CHA**

Age: 6 years and older
Number of players: minimum 5-10
Time: 10 min
Material: music for dancing
3.4 THE SNAIL

Age: 6 years and older
Number of players: minimum 5-10
Time: 10 min
Material: none

Everybody forms a circle; the facilitator stays out and plays the snail. He starts singing: « and one and two and three, and the third comes with me », he touches three players and the third follows him. When everybody is following the snail, which stops, the others surround it with a tight circle and they stop forming the spiral shell. The facilitator shows the players the spiral shape the circle has taken. Then the last one walks back to the opposite direction, everybody follows forming the circle again and he sings: "I am a snail, I'm not a mouse and I never leave my house, if I feel lonely someone will cheer me up, and one and two and three and the third comes with me. In my house we "ll stay like kings".

Goal of the game:
Move, improve body contact, have fun, make rhythmic movements in cooperation with others.
3.5 CROCODILE GAME

**GOAL OF THE GAME**

Have fun, stimulate movements and cooperation among the players.

**EXPLANATION**

Show the players the borders of the area where they are free to swim as in a lake. Put the sheets of paper on the ground, those represent islands. Command everybody to swim all around the place except on the papers till the facilitator shouts: “crocodile” and everybody runs onto the papers in order not to be eaten. Those who are not on the islands are eaten and therefore eliminated from the game. Keep reducing the number of islands to make the game more interesting. Finally the one left is the winner.

**Age:** 10 years and older  
**Number of players:** minimum 10  
**Time:** 10 min  
**Material:** sheets of paper
3.6 THE SIAMESE TWINS

Age: 10 years and older
Number of players: minimum 5-10
Time: 10 min
Material: none

After fixing on the ground the departure line and the arrival line, the players divide into couples. The partners of each couple turn their back to each other, keeping their back and elbows in touch and they grab each other’s arms. One of them is turned towards the arrival line. At the start signal, “the siamese twins” run towards the arrival line never separating from each other; in case they separate they immediately have to rejoin. Once arrived, the couples come back not turning their backs. Who was ahead before, at the return will stay behind. The siamese twins who first reach the departure line will be the winners of the competition.

GOAL OF THE GAME

Work together, cooperate, have body contacts.
3.7 SIT ON ME

**GOAL OF THE GAME**

Favour coordination and balance of the group.

**EXPLANATION**

The players form a pretty tight circle facing the centre. Then, everybody turns a quarter to the side indicated by the facilitator of the game in order to have the back versus the belly of the near ones. Each one puts his hands on the shoulders or the waist of the companion ahead, keeps his legs well tightened and pays attention in order not to be too close nor too far from the companion. The facilitator invites everyone to sit on the knees of the companion behind. Once everybody sat, he invites the players to move: ahead, back, run, walk, jump... that's why they'll have to move together at his signals.

Re-mark: the most the players are close at the beginning of the game, best is the balance of the sat circle. If the players have different sizes, the facilitator’s interest is to alternate small and big ones to distribute in a balanced way the weight of the group in the circle.

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**Age:** 10 years and older  
**Number of players:** minimum 10  
**Time:** 10 min  
**Material:** none
The group is divided into 5-8 peoples’ teams arranged along the available directions. Each team plans how to build a machine only using their bodies. It has to be a real machine, like a phone or a bicycle for instance. It can also be an imaginary machine which has never been invented before. In 5 minutes, the teams come back and each team has to build its machine not saying what is going to be. The others have to guess it.

Work together, cooperate, test each person’s different qualities.
**GOAL OF THE GAME**

Work together, cooperate, focus, have a body contact.

**EXPLANATION**

The group is divided into more teams containing the same number of participants. Show that each part of the body (hands, feet, back, etc.) that touches the floor earns one point. When you announce a number, the whole team has to form such number as fast as possible. For example, if you have 5 people in a team, you announce 17 = 10 feet and 7 hands touch the floor. 5 = everybody has to stand on one leg. 20 = everybody lies on the floor with his hands and his feet touching the surface.

**AGE AND REQUIREMENTS**

- Age: 10 years and older
- Number of players: Minimum 10
- Time: 10 min
- Material: none
3.10 SPIDER WEB

Age: 10 years and older
Number of players: minimum 8-10
Time: 1 min
Material: 30 mt rope

The group stands in a circle. The first person taking the rope, keeps a part of it in his hand and says: “my name is... and I through the rope (that can be fastened to a small ball or a plastic bottle) to...(and asks another participant’s name in the group). The person receiving the rope as well keeps a part of it and asks another person’s name. The game ends when everybody holds a piece of the rope. Finally a web will be formed and a person from outside can get over it.
Variation: instead of their names people can say: I am, I like etc.

Understand the importance of social relations, of the web and help of the community.
4. GAMES TO DISCOVER YOUR IDENTITY

These games are useful to know and accept yourself and to live in a positive way. Everybody gets involved. By discovering our values and developing the knowledge of our own skills, we can increase our self-esteem.

We discover our identity through our personal story (our name, values, customs, skills), as much as our physical characteristics (sexuality, emotions, relationships). Discovering our identity allows us to obtain self-consciousness as an individual and as a subject in relationship. Understanding one’s identity also allows us to know our culture (cultural identity) and to accept other cultures.

These games allow children to discover their uniqueness and that of others.

At the end of each game we can ask one or more of these questions, to allow the participants to gain awareness about the reason of the game and the trainer to receive feedback from the group:

- Why have we played this game?
- How do you feel at the end of the game?
- What have you thought during the game?
- Which is the thing you’ve liked most?
- What did you find easy?
- What did you find difficult?
- Do you think you will ever use this game again in your life?
- When and how?
4.1 IDENTITY CARD

Age: 8 years and older
Number of players: minimum 5
Time: 30 min
Material: papers and pens

Everyone individually creates his identity card like suggested here. Finally, some participants can share with the group what they've written, in particular their gifts, talents, life expectations.

Help the child to describe himself according to all his characteristics. Increase self-esteem.
4.2 Circle of Identity and Self-Esteem

**Goal of the Game**

Help children to describe others. Increase self-esteem, relationships among the group.

**Explanation**

A volunteer sits in front of the group. The facilitator draws a big circle with a smaller circle inside (containing the person’s name). The interior circle represents the person and the segments of the exterior circle represent what the volunteer knows about him like what the others know about him.

Ask the volunteer: how would you describe yourself in terms of qualities, values, roles, believes and talents? The answers are written on the segments of the exterior circle. For instance, the volunteer could say: fair painter, good mother. Besides ask the group: do you see in him/her more values or qualities?

Use different coloured pens to take note of the group’s answers always on the segments of the exterior circle. For instance the group could add: strict, shy, prudent, responsible, reserved, loveable, nice, kind, calm, pretty, loves reading, leader, simple etc. Ask the volunteer: “how do you feel according to what people thinks about you?” Analyse the comments, both positive and negative, expressed by the group.

**Age:** 8 years and older  
**Number of players:** minimum 5  
**Time:** 30 min  
**Material:** papers, pens on pencils
4.3 PERSONAL PLAN

Age: 8 years and older
Number of players: minimum 5
Time: 45 min
Material: a big paper for each person with a human shape drawn in the middle, markers or pencils of all colours

Give each participant a paper and some markers/pencils. Explain that the plan is to start telling the story of your life in a visual way. Make sure the players feel free to draw or write. Ask the participants to imagine the shape of the human being drawn on the paper as themselves and to write within the shape drawn. Give 10 minutes to answer the following questions: what makes you special and unique? What makes you important? What are you able to do? Ask now the participants to write out of the shape. Give 10 minutes to answer the following questions: who is important to you? Where would you like to go?

Identify everybody’s strengths through his life story.
GOAL OF THE GAME
Increase self-knowledge and friendship among the players.

EXPLANATION
Take some pictures from a newspaper and create a "patchwork" that shows your story. Each participant has to choose the pictures he likes and that represents some of his positive sides or something positive he owns. Set the pictures close to one another.
Complete the patchwork in a quite place, so that you can’t disturb the others or be disturbed. This is important because the activity is difficult. People are not obliged to tell what they have written, but everybody has to show the pictures chosen.

Avoid to laugh or to give comments about what the others have communicated, nothing is considered wrong or correct, but only what people think or feel.
After finishing the patchwork answer the following questions:
Why did I choose these pictures?
What do I feel and what do I think looking at them?

Age: 8 years and older
Number of players: minimum 5
Time: 30 min
Material: pictures from newspapers, pens and pencils

4.4 LIFE STORY THROUGH A « PATCHWORK »
4.5 ALBUM OF PICTURES

Age: 10 years and older  
Number of players: minimum 5  
Time: 30 min  
Material: papers, pens

**GOAL OF THE GAME**

Increase self-knowledge and self-esteem getting conscious of our story and of the people who helped us to strengthen our identity.

**EXPLANATION**

The players draw on a blank paper a table with 6 windows for the pictures. Inside the windows, the facilitator asks to draw those people who have been important in their lives, who have helped them grow (through their ideas, advices...)

Below each window, write the word or the statement told by these people that allowed them grow, that helped them...

Finally ask the participants what they think about the exercise and invite them to freely share their albums.
5. ENHANCEMENT GAMES

These games are useful to underline the importance of positive thinking and to develop self-esteem in order to prevent depressive symptoms and negative self-thoughts. Self-esteem is an important aspect for children’s positive growth that allows them to face challenges and to test themselves in new situations. Aggressive children and teenagers often act with strength and determination although inside they lack confidence and depend on other peoples’ opinions. The impotence of a weak “self” causes aggressive behaviors. A positive self-esteem reduces uncertainties and the tendency to aggressive behaviors. People with a strong “self” are able to recognise and respect their own limits and those of others, to communicate to others their needs and will; they learn to manifest feelings, express themselves and admit what’s negative, avoiding feelings like lack of strength, fear or regret that can lead to aggressiveness.

On the contrary, children with a weak “self” are not able to carry themselves in a positive way in relationships with others. They may not have the opportunity to reconcile the negative image they have of themselves with their positive traits and they reach the conclusion that other people consider them in the same way they see themselves. Giving a child the chance during a game to experience his/her own value and develop self-esteem is an important step towards preventing social aggressive behaviours. Reinforcing one’s own “self” and self-esteem are prerequisites for the positive development of human qualities and social relationships, forming the foundation for responsible action.

At the end of each game we can ask one or more of these questions, to allow the participants to gain awareness of the reason for the game and to give the trainer feedback from the group:

- What have you learned in this game for your life?
- Do you think you ever use this game in your life? When and how?
5.1 AM, I CAN, I HAVE

Age: 12 years and older
Number of players: minimum 5
Time: 20 min
Material: paper sheets, pens or pencils, adhesive tape

EXPLANATION

Using adhesive tape stick on each participant's shoulder a paper with three statements: I am... I can... I have... the players have to walk around the room with a pencil in their hand, completing the statements with positive characteristics that correspond to every "friend". The game ends when all statements have been completed. Now everyone can lift the paper and read what the others think about him. The authors of the statements remain anonymous, to allow the children to find the courage to tell others what they normally wouldn't say freely.

GOAL OF THE GAME

Recognise ourselves and others peoples' positive sides.
5.2 I AM PROUD

**GOAL OF THE GAME**

Recognise ourselves and others peoples’ positive sides.

**EXPLANATION**

Write something positive you are happy about. Ex. I am proud I helped this person when... Share freely with the others.

**Age** : 8 years and older  
**Number of players** : minimum 5  
**Time** : 20 min  
**Material** : paper sheets, pens and pencils
5.3 GOOD NEWS

Age: 6 years and older
Number of players: minimum 10
Time: 20 min
Material: paper sheets, pens and pencils

The participants have to sit down all together or divide into groups. They have to start a statement using the same words, such as for instance: “the most beautiful thing that happened today is...”, “I like (somebody’s name) because...”, “one thing I like about Paul is...”

Variation: the class can create a good news journal, the students write the most beautiful things on big papers and after they decorate them. The papers will be often changed.

Recognise ourselves and others peoples’ positive sides.
5.4 Hope in the future starts from certainty in the present

**GOAL OF THE GAME**

Improve hope in ourselves, in life, in God.

**EXPLANATION**

Everybody writes on a paper what loves most of himself, then what he would like to change of himself. Everyone shares with the others what he has written and gives the reason.

**Age:** 12 years and older

**Number of players:** minimum 6

**Time:** 30 min

**Material:** paper sheets, pens and pencils
5.5 THE CHILD’S NAME IN A COMPARTMENT

**GOAL OF THE GAME**
Encourage students to recognise their own positive sides and the others’.

**EXPLANATION**
Put a diagram in the bottom of the class with each student’s name in a box. Allow the students to write a few words and qualities of each student. They can also write in their own box.

**Age**: 12 years and older  
**Number of players**: the whole class  
**Time**: 30 min  
**Material**: paper sheets, pens and pencils
5.6 THE TWO BEST THINGS

Age: 8 years and older
Number of players: the whole class
Time: 10 min
Material: none

EXPLANATION
At the end of each day ask the students to remind two positive facts occurred and keep them in their mind.

GOAL OF THE GAME
Help to see the positive sides in a day and remind them. Help to face with a positive spirit the day after.
5.7 A HAPPY MEMORY OF MY LIFE

Age: 6 years and older
Number of players: the whole class
Time: 30 min
Material: paper sheets, pen or pencil

Divide the class into groups of 15 people.
Each participant has to say a happy memory of his life, then a spokesman summarizes for the group the emotions felt by everybody.

GOAL OF THE GAME
Enhance each person's good things and make students meet one another.
Age: 12 years and older  
Number of players: 10-20  
Time: 10 min  
Material: paper sheets, pen or pencil  

Everybody writes his name and draws a small picture of his face. Then everybody passes the paper to his left. Each person writes something kind about him or her, whose name is on the paper. So the paper is passed to all players until it goes back to his owner.

Recognise ourselves and others peoples' positive sides.
5.9 THE WORDS OF FRIENDSHIP

Age: 7 years and older
Number of players: 12-40
Time: 20 min
Material: paper sheets, pen or pencil

In pairs, write 7 words about friendship on a paper. The players are divided into groups of 4 and identify 7 words among those everybody has written. After they will form groups of 12 and choose again only 7 words who are the most representative for all. Finally each group reads the words and discuss together:

Is it difficult or easy to live these words about friendship? What stops or helps friendship? The class can commit to a behaviour that helps friendship and verify together at the end of the week.

To speak about friendship, create a good environment, make the children know each other, promote the sharing of ideas.
5.10 20 GOOD THINGS I HAVE

EXPLANATION

Age: 7 years and older
Number of players: 12-40
Time: 20 min
Material: paper sheets, pen or pencil

Everybody has to write on a paper 20 positive things he/she has (nature, skills, qualities, physical characteristics) and then read them to the class.

GOAL OF THE GAME

Help to identify the positive things, enhance them, increase self-esteem and get to know better one another.
Listening is the most important skill of those who help others. We don’t only listen through our ears but as well through our eyes, spirit, body and heart. Listening is a very complex capability that requires engagement and interest. Active listening is a listening method directed at evaluating an exchange among those involved. Active listening pays attention to the emotions and can put in action both the individual and collective resources.

Through these listening games, children are helped to understand their attitudes towards listening and can learn how to listen effectively.

Communication games allow children to develop their skills of expression, both verbal and non-verbal, using different methods according to their culture and situations. Through communication, people express their opinions and wills, needs and fears, their need of advice and help. The games in this chapter will help children to understand those elements that limit communication or cause difficulties.

At the end of each game we can ask one or more of these questions, to allow the participants to gain awareness about the reason of the game and the trainer to receive feedback from the group:

- Why have we played this game?
- How do you feel at the end of the game?
- What have you thought during the game?
- Which is the thing you’ve liked most?
- What did you find easy?
- What did you find difficult?
- Do you think you will ever use this game again in your life? When and how?
6.1 BACK TO BACK - FACE TO FACE

**GOAL OF THE GAME**

This exercise, in the three following phases, remarks the importance of communication, both verbal and non-verbal.

**EXPLANATION**

Age: 7-18 years  
Number of players: 15-35  
Time: 10 min  
Material: none

Arrange the participants in couples and back to back. Each participant from the A line starts to tell his partner from the B line a tale or something interesting about himself. Give them one minute to talk and after they will exchange and the other one will talk. Remind the players to stay in couple avoiding to turn back. Afterwards ask: how do you feel when you are about to talk? What makes the sharing and listening hard? Keeping the same partners, they’ll set face to face. The partner A will tell the same tale from before. This will do so that the B partner looks at the A partner but behaves as if he wasn’t about to listen. One minute later ask them to exchange role. Then ask: how did you feel while speaking? How did you realize your partner wasn’t listening? Keep the same partners facing each other. The A partner will tell the same tale from before. This will do so that the B partner keeps looking at the A partner and shows, without speaking, through actions, face expressions and signals, that he’s paying attention and understands what he’s going to tell him. One minute later, ask them to exchange role. Ask: how did you feel while speaking? How did you realize your partner was listening?
6.2 EXERCISE IN COUPLE

Age: 7-18 years
Number of players: Minimum 15 / Maximum 35
Time: 10 min
Material: none

The partners sit face to face in couple. Ask the A partner to tell again a tale the B partner. This will do so that the B partner will do his best to listen the A partner. Give them 4 minutes for the conversation, then ask the B partner to repeat what he has understood by A. Give them the time needed, then ask them to exchange role. Ask: what did you feel this time? Have you found listening and repeating easy or difficult? (the most will find difficult to remember everything their partner said)

to understand the advantages of the active listening.
**GOAL OF THE GAME**

Make an experience of following and directing another person and understand the difficulties of it.

**EXPLANATION**

The partners keep staying in couple face to face. Tell the A partner to start making some movements and the B to imitate him as in front of a mirror.
A few minutes later, they will exchange role and A will try and imitate the B's movements.
Ask: do you prefer directing or following? (the most will say they have loved directing because it is hard following).

**AGE**

7-18 years

**NUMBER OF PLAYERS**

Minimum 15 / Maximum 35

**TIME**

10 min

**MATERIAL**

none
Lack of self-assurance, fear of relationships, prejudices, and the refusal of others can provoke aggressiveness and lead to broken relationships with others. In addition to learning to know ourselves better, trust towards the other is also essential to improving relationships and opportunities for guidance, reducing aggressive behaviours and facilitating psychosocial wellness. The knowledge process reflects the difference between childrens’ and parents’ perceptions, and the way they are perceived by others. For reciprocal comprehension, it is very important to make these differences clear. The games and exercises give participants the chance to discover, without any danger, how their behaviour has social repercussions. In this manner, their capability to understand others increases and they learn to estimate the future effects of their actions and personality.
Learning to know ourselves and others better strengthens self-assurance, thereby reducing aggressiveness.

At the end of each game we can ask one or more of these questions, not forcing people to talk and without judging:

What have you learned from this game?
Do you think you will ever use this game in your life?
When and how?
7.1 THE BLIND

In couples, one participant is blind (he shuts his eyes or puts a blindfold on). In complete silence the other participant holds the blind's hand and leads him for a walk. Afterwards they exchange role.

Variation: the blind and his guide are kept together only by their little fingers.

Variation: one participant (the driver) takes place behind the other (the car) and he drives him without saying a word, only through a pressure on his shoulders. After a few minutes they exchange role.

GOAL OF THE GAME

Develop reciprocal attention; have the experience to be deprived for a moment of one sense; test how you feel when you take somebody else in charge and how much you are able to rely on somebody you depend on.

EXPLANATION

Age: 6 years and older
Number of players: minimum 2
Time: 20 min
Material: some blindfolds
7.2 BLIND TRAINS

Age: 6 years and older
Number of players: minimum 3
Time: 20 min
Material: some blindfolds

The players are divided into groups of 3, placed in line, each one keeps his hands on the shoulders of who is ahead.
At first, the one ahead leads the train, while the 2 “cars” keep their eyes shut. With some exercise, the driver will be able to be in the back of the train - the last of the line.
It will be done so that everybody will have tried each position. Finally, it is possible to lengthen the train increasing the number of “cars”.

Develop reciprocal attention; have the experience to be deprived for a moment of one sense.
7.3 HUM TOGETHER

**GOAL OF THE GAME**

Develop trust and group spirit.

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**EXPLANATION**

Everybody sits down forming a circle, everybody shuts his eyes, one person begins to hum one single note for about 5 or 6 seconds, then he/she lightly touches his/her right player’s shoulder, this begins to hum, in the same way, a simple note. And there they are the two hum together, after 5,6 seconds, the second person touches his right player who equally hums following this pattern, a third, fourth, fifth person will hum. Finally, everybody will be humming, there will be a resonance, a peace, a common connection. When they’ll be humming all together the participants open their eyes in 10-12 seconds.

**Parameters:**

- **Age:** 10 years and older
- **Number of players:** minimum 5-10
- **Time:** 15 min
- **Material:** none
In order to recognize and understand other people’s feelings we have first of all to know and recognize our own feelings, accept them and express them in a correct way. We have to understand, for example, that rage and aggressiveness are human feelings and that we can express them without feeling guilty. The way human beings manifest their feelings and react to other peoples’ feelings is a fundamental criterion for cohabitation. Through our experience, we can see how, for example, a traumatic event has repercussions on a person and his emotions. Not being able to express one’s feelings or choosing to repress them, often causes people to suffer in a state of constant privation that in some cases can be harmful from a psychological or even a physical point of view. Therefore, people who have suffered from trauma have to learn to explore and know their emotions in order to communicate with serenity and at the same time express them in the most constructive way possible. The price of a badly managed emotional life is evident in those situations in which people express their sorrow, hatred or anger in a destructive way for themselves and for others, leading some times to criminal behaviour, death, and even war. Often, people are able to overcome their sorrow if they are able to talk about it. Recognizing emotions is as also the basis for a good solution to problems. Games can facilitate the knowledge and comprehension of our emotions and those of others. They can also open up more ways of expressions and manifestation of feelings.

At the end of each game we can ask one or more of these questions, not forcing people to talk and without judging:

What have you learned from this game?
Do you think you will ever use this game in your life?
When and how?

NOTE: The games described in this section starting from point 8.3 can be used by the teachers in class with students to improve relationships and communication in the class. We suggest doing one exercise per week from the following list, and keeping a diary for the class where the students can freely write what they thought and felt during these exercises. This is one more instrument to help students to communicate.
8.1 WHEN I AM ANGRY

**GOAL OF THE GAME**

Help to express the anger’s feeling and feel other people’s emotions.

**EXPLANATION**

The participants sit down forming a circle, one at a time they have to say their name and say what they do when they are angry.

Ex. My name is XX and when I am angry I do like this...

The other participants have to repeat all together that gesture.

**Age:** 6 years and older  
**Number of players:** minimum 5-10  
**Time:** 15 min  
**Material:** none
Age: 6 years and older
Number of players: minimum 5-10
Time: 15 min
Material: none

The participants receive a paper with the beginning of a statement about anger, that has to be continued. Then, in small groups, they read these statements and comment on them.

Examples of beginnings of statements:
When I get angry...
My best friend makes me angry when...
I don’t feel like going to school when...
I can’t stand...
If other children make me angry...
When other people are angry...
My father says when others make me angry I have to...
Beating up is allowed when...

Help to express the anger’s feeling, share emotions and experiences with others.
8.3 THE « ME » CARDS

**GOAL OF THE GAME**
Make the knowledge among the teacher and the students easier. These cards help reciprocal knowledge and are a way to speak about yourself.

**EXPLANATION**
On each card there will be a picture that represents an object (an house, some bread..) or people expressing a particular feeling (a scared man), or a place (the sea...). The pictures have to be linked to the culture of the countries where they are used.

The game consists in choosing a card and explaining why you feel it close to your character. You can work in groups with a spokesman who summarizes for the whole group the qualities chosen.

**AGE: 6 years and older**
**Number of players: minimum 15 max 40**
**Time: 30 min**
**Material: have 30 pictures ready. It is possible to prepare more with the players**
8.4 THE DOMINO GAME

Age: 6 years and older
Number of players: minimum 15 max 40
Time: 20 min
Material: blank sheets of paper, markers

Set the class in a circle. Each participant has to write his expectation on a paper. The teacher starts the domino laying down his paper with the word “expectations” written on it. Then a player starts putting his paper near the one with the word “expectations”. If some participant has a similar expectation, he adds it near the paper already set and so on.

The domino concept is used in order to understand the participants’ expectations. The goal is getting as close as possible to the participants’ needs, to make doubts clear, to collect their ambitions and encourage their participation to the training.
**8.5 THE MARKET OF EMOTIONS**

**GOAL OF THE GAME**

To help children to express both negative and positive emotions, share their feelings with their companions and teacher. That helps to learn how to create a strong relationship among students and teacher (after children feel less lonely).

**EXPLANATION**

Each student chooses a card and completes the statement written on it with a thought or a memory. Then he exchanges his card with a companion and the game starts again.

Below a list of cards to prepare:
- I get angry when...
- I feel anxious when...
- I am happy when...
- I feel sad when...
- I feel aggressive when...
- A nice present I received was...
- The game I love most is...
- When I will be adult I wish...
- The thing that annoys me...
- The person I love most...
- The most important emotion for me...
- The part of my body I don't love...
- The countries I'd like to visit...
- The place I love...
- The subject I love most...
- The song I love most...
- The animal I love...
- The three things that annoy me...
- Three funny things to me.....

**Age:** 6 years and older  
**Number of players:** minimum 15 max 40  
**Time:** 60 min  
**Material:** cards of emotions
8.6 THE GAME OF NEEDS

GOAL OF THE GAME
For the well being of the class it is very important paying attention to children’s needs. This game helps children to talk about their needs.

EXPLANATION
Age: 6 years and older
Number of players: minimum 15 max 40
Time: 60 min
Material: cards of needs

Prepare the needs’ cards before the game starts:
- I need safety
- I need to have my place
- I need to be understood
- I need to be seen
- I need to be believed
- I need....

Put the cards on the floor and ask each student to pick one, one at a time sit near the card that express his need and repeat aloud the need.
8.7 THE MEMORY CARDS

**GOAL OF THE GAME**

To improve the memory skills, make comprehension and expression of emotions easier.

**EXPLANATION**

The teacher scatters all the cards on the floor with the picture facing the floor (or on a big table with the students around). The students are divided into 4 groups and they stay on the four angles of the table. The goal of the game is to guess the largest number of equal couples of cards. Each group of students has one chance to choose two cards, they turn them and show them to everybody. If the two cards are different they pass their turn, if they have guessed two equal cards, such cards are taken by the group and they give the right to pick two more. Before that though, a member of the group has to tell a situation in which he felt the emotion described on the card.

**AGE**

6 years and older

**NUMBER OF PLAYERS**

Minimum 15 max 40

**TIME**

60 min

**MATERIAL**

Memory cards (they have different pictures, two pictures per card)
8.8 SNAKES AND LADDERS GAME

**GOAL OF THE GAME**
To favour reciprocal knowledge among the children and with their teacher, to get to know the children’s story, family, etc.

**EXPLANATION**
In turn each student can draw the dice and, as the number out, proceed on the table (starting from 1 until the last number on the table). On each box there is a word and a picture and the student has to tell a happening, a memory, a thought according to the word written on the box.

**Material:** Snakes and Ladders game table, prepared with actions, feelings, emotions

**Age:** 6 years and older
**Number of players:** minimum 15 max 40
**Time:** 60 min
9. GAMES TO MANAGE AGGRESSIVENESS

Children, alone or in groups, can sometimes meet a situation with anger they cannot manage, risking an explosion of anger, both physical and verbal. Some children cannot manage to control themselves in such situations without reacting with more anger. It is very important to learn to control this strong emotion.

Games that help children control anger are orientated to bodily control respect for the other. Anger and aggressiveness do not emerge as isolated experiences; on the contrary, there is always something that causes these sensations as reactions. Very often, anger and aggressiveness in children and teenagers arise when their desires or needs are not satisfied or when their ambitions and goals are not reached. If aggressiveness cannot be directed towards the source of frustration, people risk addressing it towards someone or something unrelated to the cause. Among children’s needs there is the need to have value, to be able to do something, to be accepted by the society, and to belong to someone. A child’s fantasy of for once being nice, older, or stronger than others can lead to aggressive conflicts. As a consequence, rage and aggressiveness are not feelings addressed to others with a negative intention; instead they are attempts to do something good for oneself. Therefore, those who know the origin of rage and aggressiveness can manage such feelings. Through some exercises, above all physical and interactive games, children who are overwhelmed by emotions can experience a situation of simulated tension in which they can test non-aggressive solutions to solve their problems.

At the end of each game we can ask one or more of these questions, not forcing people to talk and without judging:

- What have you learned from this game?
- Do you think you will ever use this game in your life?
- When and how?
**9.1 MISSILE LEAVING**

**Age:** 6 years and older  
**Number of players:** minimum 5-10  
**Time:** 15 min  
**Material:** none

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**EXPLANATION**

The participants play a tam tam with their fingers on the table, slowly at first, and then faster, with their palms on the table, slowly and then faster. Afterwards they beat their feet on the floor, slowly at first and then faster. A slight noise becomes a very strong shout, the noise and the movement increase little by little. Children stand up; raise their arms in the air with a shout. The missile’s left. They slowly sit down, their movements calm down, and the noise slows down, decreases and disappears. The missile is disappeared among the clouds.

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**GOAL OF THE GAME**

Help control and reduce anger and aggressiveness.
9.2 BACK VERSUS BACK

Age: 6 years and older
Number of players: minimum 5-10
Time: 15 min
Material: none

The participants form two lines and they hold each others’ arms. After they turn their backs and try to push the other line. The lines must not break. The game can be played with a different arrangement of the lines.

Goal of the Game
Reduce excessive energy, test that in groups individual strength increases for the weak ones, and that the strong ones can support others.
**EXPLANATION**

The participants have to write on a paper what they do so far in order to free themselves from anger. Example: going by bicycle, beating a boxing bag, whistling, running etc. The best ideas and the most original ones will be written on a big sheet of paper and displayed in the class, so that everybody can see them.

**GOAL OF THE GAME**

Learn different appropriate behaviours and control aggressiveness.

**Age:** 6 years and older  
**Number of players:** minimum 5-10  
**Time:** 15 min  
**Material:** sheets of paper, pencils or pens
9.4 MY BOOK AGAINST ANGER

GOAL OF THE GAME

Learn different appropriate behaviours and control aggressiveness.

EXPLANATION

Each child gets a note-book and he will call it method against anger. In such note-book he may write or draw those facts that make him angry, how he feels and what he should or would do to calm down, avoiding to damage himself or others. A first page from the note-book can be added, where the child draws or writes something positive about himself and his environment. On the last page his friends may write what they find positive and lovable in him. The note-book can be used as a memories note-book and modified in time.

Age: 10 years and older
Number of players: minimum 5-10
Time: 15 min
Material: note-books, pencils or pens
10. GAMES TO SOLVE CONFLICTS

The resolution of conflicts consists in solving problems through cooperation, directed to help individuals and groups distinguish their interests and find suitable solutions. By integrating methods of conflict resolution based on dialogue, non-violent communication, mediation, negotiation and other means into their curricula, schools and non-formal education projects can solve most problems of violence that arise in the classroom or community. Conflicts are caused by different interests. Adults perceive them as a threat and they’re managed very quickly. Children have learned that the strongest one wins and the weakest one has to defend, that’s why children and teenagers are helpless in conflicts and react aggressively. But rage does not solve conflicts. On the contrary, anger causes conflicts to endure and make relationships heavy. It’s not possible to live without conflicts, but it is possible to learn how to solve them. A solution to conflicts is based on mutual respect and the freedom to manifest our own interests while avoiding to hurt others. Even if fundamentally children need social interaction, lots of children avoid contact with others. They need, first of all, to learn how to manage their needs, to reduce anxiety and accept closeness so that they can find their way towards others. Children have to learn how to play with one another instead of always versus one another, and to discover how much safety and joy they can have doing with and for others. When children are able to develop non-aggressive relationships, they are able to enjoy positive feelings towards others and prepare a positive ground for the constructive solution of conflicts. Interactive games do not reduce conflicts but can help develop ideas to solve them. The presupposition for the non-aggressive solutions of conflicts can be trust and common will to work for a solution to conflicts that can be shared by everyone.

At the end of each game we can ask one or more of these questions, not forcing people to talk and without judging:

- What have you learned from this game?
- Do you think you will ever use this game in your life?
- When and how?
**10.1 CARDS TO SOLVE CONFLICTS**

**EXPLANATION**

1- Read this statement to a participant: being in conflict is normal. You are in a conflict when you don’t agree with someone. This can happen no matter with whom, a friend of yours, your brother or sister, someone at school or in the street. You can be in a conflict even if you don’t get what you want or if you feel mistreated. Well, you can solve such conflict in two ways, the violent way and the non-violent way.

**The violent way**
- It is based on violence. You are angry and you want to fight.
- One tries to dominate or eliminate the other.
- You are enemies (you fight one against the other).
- Finally, the strongest wins but as a fact, everybody loses. And nothing is arranged.

**The non-violent way**
- It is based on dialogue. You are angry, you recognise that, but you don’t discharge it against the other.
- Speaking, you express your needs and listen to the other’s needs. You listen with your ears and above all with your heart. Finally, you find a common positive solution to the conflict.
- Both of you win. And the problem is solved.

Age: 14 years and older  
Number of players: minimum 5-10  
Time: 15 min  
Material: cards, paper, pencils
Now that you know the two ways to solve conflicts, discuss with your friends.

What do you do when you are in a conflict?
What people do when they are in a conflict?

2. Read this statement to everyone: in order to solve problems you need to stay calm and have your head empty from every thought. That is why, before solving a conflict you need to count until 10, 20 or 100, depending on the tension, run a little...and above all think very objectively to what has happened and write the answers to these questions:
- Whom do I have a conflict with?
- What did I want to obtain?
- What did the other want?
- What have I done or said?
- How do I feel now?
- How could the other feel?
- What could I do to end the argument?
- What the other could do to end the argument?

Helped by this track, those who have an argument must find a solution to the problem, only in case they don’t manage, they can ask for the facilitator’s or the group’s help.
**Explanation**

The children form groups of three people and each one has to write three wishes about an agreed topic. After the groups have to discuss the wishes and get to choose one. The left wishes must be discussed by the whole group till only one wish will be chosen.

The topics of the wishes can be, for example:
- where would you like to travel to?
- which game would you like to play the next hour?
- what would you like to eat?

**Goal of the game**

Learn to respect others and interact with them affirming your interests without invading others.

**10.2 The Three Wishes**

- **Age:** 10 years and older
- **Number of players:** minimum 5-10
- **Time:** 30 min
- **Material:** cards, paper, pencils
10.3 THE TABLE OF CONFLICTS

Age: 10 years and older
Number of players: minimum 5-10
Time: 30 min
Material: paper, pencils

Table of conflicts:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My wishes</th>
<th>Possible conflicts</th>
<th>My peaceful solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

This table can be filled with a friend or in group. In group you can fill the list of elements that cause conflicts. Finally the peaceful solutions are decided.
After filling the table ask:
Which are the peaceful solutions you have used so far?
Which are easy to respect? Which are difficult?

Allow to solve a problem in a reasonable way.
**GOAL OF THE GAME**

Reduce tensions between girls and boys and eliminate discriminations among them.

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**EXPLANATION**

The participants sit down and form a circle. One participant stays in the middle, goes towards a person and asks: do you want to be my friend? The participant's answer will be a joyful NO so the game goes on. The person in the middle asks then: whose friend are you going to be? The one who answers, according to his fantasy, will say: who is long haired, who has got a small nose, who is a girl etc... the players corresponding to the named features will run and change their place and the person in the middle will try to find a place among the left ones. The person who will be without a place will stay in the middle and the game will start again.

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**AGE:** 6 years and older  
**NUMBER OF PLAYERS:** minimum 5-10  
**TIME:** 30 min  
**MATERIAL:** none
GOAL OF THE GAME

Understand that everyone can have different opinions with some good reasons; understand the importance of tolerance and respect.

EXPLANATION

Age: 6 years and older  
Number of players: minimum 5-10  
Time: 30 min  
Material: sheets of paper and pencils or pens

Label four sheets of paper: “I totally agree”, “I agree”, “I absolutely disagree”, “I disagree”. Place a paper on each wall of the classroom (in case you are out-doors, place a few chairs on opposite sides, leaving space as if you are in a classroom). Explain the middle of the class is considered as neutral or “I don’t know”. Show the participants that, when a statement is told (like: “adults always answer better than children”) they have to choose whether they agree or not, and how much, and go to the proper place in the class. Once all the players have chosen their place, ask the members from each side to give a reason to their choice and try to convince the others to join their side. When a large number has changed his mind, read more statements and start again. Topics to discuss: “we can agree about..., or disagree”. Insist on tolerance and importance of respecting other peoples’ opinions. We can disagree about some issues, and discuss and learn from each other. Our disagreement does not mean we have to argue or fight. Friendship can be based on reciprocal respect, not only on similarity of opinions.
10.6 EVERYTHING SETTLES

**EXPLANATION**

The group divides into 2 teams. In turn, each participant from a team tells something that goes wrong. That can be invented or real and go from a small event to a big catastrophe. Afterwards everyone has spoken, a player from the other team suggests a solution, that will always be formulated by the whole team. For instance: “I forgot my note-book! - I will lend you a paper!” “the wall collapsed” – let’s reconstruct it...

**GOAL OF THE GAME**

Find solutions, develop a positive spirit, promoting mutual help and construction.

**AGE**

10 years and older

**NUMBER OF PLAYERS**

Minimum 10

**TIME**

20 min

**MATERIAL**

None
10.7 THE TEN STEPS OF THE CLASS

Age: 10 years and older
Number of players: minimum 15 max 40
Time: 60 min
Material: the card of 10 steps

Give each student a card (as shown below) and the student has to complete it writing his opinion. After each card is shared with the class that must first of all try to mark the positive aspects, writing them on a table, then the problems and try to find strategies to improve.

"TEN STEPS" in this activity my name is ........
I believe my class is ...........
I think my school mates are ...........
I wish my class ............
I'm afraid of ............... From my class I expect ...........
I love about my class ...........
From my school mates I need ...........
In my class in the future I'll try to ...........
Finally I want to say ......

Mark the situation of the class according to the students’ point of view, mark whether there are problems of relationship among the students, in order to see whether the students are involved in the changement of relationships in class.
GOAL OF THE GAME

Cooperate and find a solution together through a mediation.

EXPLANATION

Divide the participants into groups of 15 people. The group has to imagine to be in a shipwreck, and has to go on a small boat with their personal belongings in order to survive on a deserted island. On the boat they can only get 10 objects. The objects must be chosen according to their importance to survive on the island. Each participant writes his list, and then in small groups of 3 everybody shares his list and writes a common list.

After each small group will choose a player who will take part at the wreck council in order to choose the final list. The council chooses, having the other participants sat around them in a circle. At the end of the game ask everybody the following questions:

- How did you reach the final list?
- Was the agreement easy?
- Which conflicts did you have?
- Did each participant feel represented by the council?
- Did each participant accept the final decision even if somebody would have supported different choices?

Age: 10 years and older
Number of players: minimum 15 max 45
Time: 60 min
Material: none