

A playful approach to preventing violence

Schools are important arenas for promoting gender equality and preventing domestic violence through workshops for children and adolescents.

"The aim of these initiatives is to help build a world where children can create relationships free from gender stereotypes and any form of violence," said the promoter of the project, ADICE, in the article. (Photo: Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality)

About the project

The (Re) Design Affections project in Portugal has focused on using schools to promote gender equality and prevent violence.

The aim of the project was to engage the whole of society in valuing the importance of eliminating gender inequalities from childhood until adolescence. This was achieved through an educational process that used a ludic-pedagogical approach, and the process extended to family and the wider social environment.

"Why was this pedagogical approach used in this project?"

"A play pedagogy was used because the project was developed exclusively for a school environment. This methodology was deemed the most effective as it employs stimulating activities, such as games and group dynamics, to motivate children to learn concepts related to gender issues," says Maria Trindade Vale, the President of the Association for the Integrated Development of the City of Ermesinde (ADICE).

The three main goals to be achieved:

- Develop primary and secondary prevention actions.
- Involve students aged between 6 and 18 years old, their legal guardians and non-teaching staff, in operational, formative and informative training workshops, using a ludic-pedagogy, with the main tool being communication between the pupils and other participants.
- Reinforce the skills of listening and understanding in relation to promoting gender equality, a sense of belonging, non-discrimination and the prevention of domestic violence.

"The reason why we wanted these goals to be part of a learning process centred around such a broad group of participants is that they are all part of the educational community: pupils, non-teaching staff and parents are all key players," says Trindade Vale.

"By holding different kinds of sessions, such as workshops with strategic audiences both in educational and domestic settings, it was possible to reinforce the skills of listening and understanding in relation to promoting gender equality, a sense of belonging, non-discrimination, and the prevention of domestic violence," Trindade Vale explains.

According to the article [Project \(Re\) Design Affections begins Cycle of Workshops on Gender Equality](#), eight free online workshops on gender equality were going to be held during the project in 2021.

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Lessons learned: collaborative partnerships

There have been a number of different project partners involved in the project.

"We relied on partnerships in order to implement the project's objectives, as well as the constructive participation of the [Alfena School Group](#), [Universidade Lusófona do Porto](#), [Junta de Freguesia de Alfena](#), [Atlético Clube Alfenense](#) and [the Centre for Gender and Equality](#) (Norway)," Trindade says.

The project partners regularly discussed the project, either in person or online, sharing results and best practices, and also analysing strategies for overcoming difficulties and obstacles,' Trindade Vale explains.

"The project's success or failure depended on collaborative partnerships, carefully monitoring the project's implementation (by obtaining feedback from participants), identifying risks, and defining strategies to mitigate them", says Trindade Vale.

Workshop and training achievements

Various workshops and training sessions were held throughout the project. In total, 1367 participants (693 male and 674 female) were involved in the project. The workshops and fairs include:

- 18 animation workshops, in which 357 children from the 1st cycle participated
- 48 (in)formation and awareness workshops, in which 762 pupils from the 2nd cycle to secondary education participated
- 16 (in)formation and awareness workshops in which 65 operational assistants participated
- 12 (in)formation and awareness workshops in which 59 legal guardians participated, which included the participation of parents/mothers
- 4 fairs: 2 profession fairs (involving 1069 pupils) and two sports activities fairs (involving a total of 1073 pupils).
- 30 introductory sessions to making cinematographic short films, in which 659 children and adolescents participated, and 17 short films were made
- 637 ambassadors for equality were trained
- 168 young people joined the Volunteer Bank

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