



Module 4. Positive Relationships

Introduction to the module

Relationships refers to the various interactions that individuals have with others. **Positive Relationships** are defined as the child's ability to create and maintain strong relationships with self and others (peers, friends, family members, carers, teachers, adults etc.) (Norrish, Robinson & Williams, 2011). Regarding the PERMA model, positive relationships constitute the third core pillar of wellbeing (Seligman, 2011). Positive relationships are promoted through the development of strengths such as, kindness, empathy, forgiveness, and social intelligence; notions that constitute the virtue of humanity (Peterson & Seligman 2004).

Research scientific data have reported the importance of building positive relationships for children's wellbeing (e.g., Rose-Krasnor et al., 1996; Wartner et al., 1994). Through the relationships, children learn how to think, understand, communicate, behave, express emotions and develop social skills. By promoting positive interactions in kindergarten children learn how to positively connect with each other (classmates, teachers, family members), how to cooperate with other individuals and how to develop their communication skills (National Research Council, National Academies, 2001).

The aim of the present module "Positive Relationships" is to offer to preschool educators several activities that they can be included to their curriculum in order to help them promote positive relationships at school. This module includes ten activities in total, which are organized in lesson plans. Each lesson includes one, two or three activities. The activities can be implemented as a holistic approach, individually or in any other combination with each other.

The content of the Module 4 "Positive Relationships" chapter is structured as follows:

LESSON 1: UNDERSTANDING POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Activity 1: Friends in the river

Activity 2: The bear and the beaver

LESSON 2: CONNECTING WITH THE OTHERS

Activity 1: Leaves in the forest

Activity 2: Play alone – Play with a friend – Play with my team



Activity 3: Into to sea

LESSON 3: PROMOTING HEALTHY INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Activity 1: Drawing a friend

Activity 2: STOP! Take a photo!

LESSON 4: PRACTICING KINDNESS

Activity 1: Sweet words

Activity 2: Smile, please!

LESSON 5: UNDERSTANDING FORGIVENESS

Activity 1: I'm Sorry – I Forgive You

By undertaken this module it is expected from participants to:

- Understand the importance of connectedness and promoting positive relationships with others.
- Build healthy interpersonal relationships.
- Learn how to positively interact with others.
- Experience positive interactions at the school context.
- Learn how to develop forgiveness, kindness and compassion towards others.



Lesson 1: Understanding Positive Relationships

Lesson Overview:

This lesson includes two activities aiming to make preschool children aware of the importance of positive relationships in their lives. In the first activity children will be asked to think and reflect on both the good and the bad points in a situation. This is designed to show them the importance of cooperation and having positive interactions with others. In the second activity children will experience directly how to work in a team, collaborate and positively interact with others to achieve a common goal.

Objectives

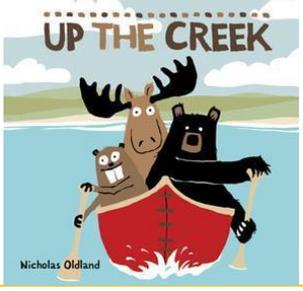
At the end of the lesson children would be able to:

- Identify in a challenging situation the positive and the negative options
- Reflect and comment on the importance of having positive relationships
- Experience the positive interactions with their classmates
- Cooperate for a common goal
- Understand and appreciate the importance of positive interactions

“Warm up” activity

The lesson addresses friendship, cooperation as well as animals and environment. Therefore, the activities could serve as an introduction to discussions on these topics, in a related project or even after unexpected conflicts or arguments between classmates that the teacher may notice at school.



Activity 1: Friends in the river	
<i>Setting</i>	In the classroom, whole-group circle
<i>Material checklist</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Book “Up the creek” by Nicholas Oldland ● Also available in: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8LEMGFnvc5I&t=14s 
<i>Pedagogical Strategies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Storytelling ● Group discussion ● Self-reflection
<i>Extending RESILIENT PRESCHOOLS Curriculum</i>	Module 4. Positive Relationships
<i>Duration</i>	20'
Introducing the activity (Duration: 5 min)	The teacher presents the book to the children, shows the cover, reads the title and gives some time to the children to think and reflect on what the book may talking about. Children express their ideas. Then, the teacher explains: “We will read this book talking about three friends, who although they were best friends they used to disagree and thus have adventures in the forest. I will turn the pages and read. Once we finish each part, you raise your hand to tell me about the friends’ adventures”. Teacher reminds children of the rules: Children have to raise their hand to talk, listen to each other, be kind and wait their turn to answer.
Activity (Duration: 10 min)	The teacher reads the book and shows the pictures to the children. After reading a part, she/he makes questions to the children. Possible questions related to the story: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Who are the friends of the story? – What was their first / second/ third trouble/adventure? What happened to them? – What solution did they find to solve their first/ second/ third problem? – Why did they argue? – What did they decide to do to go back home safely?





	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– How did they cooperate?– What did they say to each other before their lunch?– Do you think that a positive relationship among the three friends helped them to solve their problems?– Why is it important to have positive relationships?
Conclusion (Duration: 5 min)	Through a group discussion children will reflect and bring examples on how a positive relationship is: be friends, forgive each other, talk with each other, joke with each other, play with each other, help each other, listen each other





Activity 2: The bear and the beaver	
<i>Setting</i>	Outdoor / Indoor in a room with enough space for movement
<i>Material checklist</i>	Rhythmic music (optional)
<i>Pedagogical Strategies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Team activity● Physical activity
<i>Extending RESILIENT PRESCHOOLS Curriculum</i>	Module 4. Positive Relationships
<i>Duration</i>	10'
Introducing the activity (Duration: 3 min)	<p>The teacher reminds children how the three friends positively cooperated in the story to achieve a common goal, namely going back home safely. Then, the teacher encourages children to play a game in which they have to cooperate as a team to achieve a common goal too, namely help the beaver to escape from the bear.</p> <p>Children are making a “nest” by standing up in a circle, holding each other and being close to each other. Inside the circle there is a child the “beaver” and outside of the circle there is another child the “bear”.</p>
Activity (Duration: 7 min)	<p>With the teacher’s signal (or the beginning of the music) the “beaver” walks inside, outside and around the “nest”. The “bear” walks inside, outside and around the “nest” trying to catch the beaver. The children in the circle (the “nest”) help the beaver’s movements by raising their holding hands and opening bigger spaces in the circle, whereas they prevent and make it difficult for the bear to catch the beaver by lowering their holding hands and coming closer to each other.</p> <p>The beaver taps the bear on the shoulder and has to get back inside the nest before the bear can catch him or her.</p>
Conclusion	The teacher should encourage children to pay attention to beaver's and bear’s moves, work together, communicate and cooperate to save the beaver.
Material for homework exercises	Children discuss at home with their parents about what makes their family relationship a positive one and how they can positively cooperate to achieve a common goal. Children can help parents with watering the plants, tidy their toys or set the table for lunch.





**Evaluation
methodology**

As evaluation activity child the game “find the animal” could be implemented. In this activity children are sitting in the whole-group circle. A child keeps a distance from the team, the team selects an animal. When the child comes close to the team asks information about the selected animal (e.g., does it live in the water? Does it fly? Is it big?) and he/she tries to guess which animal is. The answers should strictly be “yes” – “no”. Teacher encourages the team to be honest.

During the implementation of the activities, the teacher observes and writes notes regarding:

- how well children understood the notion of positive relationship and the idea of cooperating with each other
- how well children achieved to participate in the team and cooperate with each other



Lesson 2: Connecting with the others

Lesson Overview:

This lesson includes three playful-movement activities aiming to connect children with their classmates and promote positive interactions in the classroom. Through this lesson children will gradually experience how to play individually, in pairs, and finally in a team.

Objectives

At the end of the lesson children would be able to:

- Play individual with respect to others
- Connect with each other
- Cooperate with each other
- Have positive interactions in the classroom
- Promote their communication skills



Activity 1: Leaves in the forest	
<i>Setting</i>	Indoor in a room with enough space for movement or Outdoor
<i>Material checklist</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pieces of papers or newspapers ● Dance music
<i>Pedagogical Strategies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Playful activity ● Music ● Dance and movement activity ● Individual activity
<i>Extending RESILIENT PRESCHOOLS Curriculum</i>	Module 4. Positive Relationships
<i>Duration</i>	10'
Introducing the activity (Duration: 5 min)	Around the room, on the floor there are scattered as many papers as the children. The teacher encourages children to think about the story they read in the previous lesson (lesson 1) (e.g., who were the heroes, where did they live etc.) and imagine that they are in a forest too. Specifically, they have to imagine that they are walking deep in a forest, where there are many fallen leaves around. The teacher models the movement by walking or dancing around the leaves. The teacher explains that as long as the music plays, they must not step on a fallen leaf. Whenever the music stops, they have to find an empty leaf and stand on it.
Activity (Duration: 5 min)	The teacher starts the music. Children are walking or dancing around the leaves. The teacher suddenly stops the music and children run to find an empty leaf and step on it (like a “nest”). Then, the music starts again, and the children continue to move around the leaves. Every time the music stops the teacher removes a leaf from the floor. As the leaves in the room are reduced, the team has to call the name of the child who didn't find an empty leaf-nest.
Conclusion	The child who didn't find an empty leaf-nest continued to dance with the teacher. The activity ends when the last child is left without a nest.



Activity 2: Play alone – Play with a friend – Play with my team

<i>Setting</i>	Indoor in a room with enough space for movement or Outdoor
<i>Material checklist</i>	Rhythmic music
<i>Pedagogical Strategies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Playful activity● Music, dance and movement activity● Individual activity● Activity in pairs/team
<i>Extending RESILIENT PRESCHOOLS Curriculum</i>	Module 4. Positive Relationships
<i>Duration</i>	20'
Introducing the activity (Duration: 10 min)	The teacher starts the music. Children are dancing in the room. The teacher suddenly stops the music. Children are freezing and standing motionless. In the first level of this activity, every time the music stops, the teacher calls children to make individual movements e.g., “touch the wall with your finger”, “look up the ceiling”, “raise your leg”, “hide everywhere in the classroom”.
Activity (Duration: 10 min)	The activity continued. In the second level of this activity teacher calls children to find a friend, become a pair and make movements together by using their arms, legs or the whole body, e.g., “find a pair and become a boat”, “find a pair and make a heart”, “find a pair and become a seesaw”. Gradually, the teacher could call for three children (e.g., “find a third child and shape a triangle”), four children (“four children make a lake”) etc.
Conclusion	Finally, the teacher encourages the whole team to shape giant shapes with their bodies (e.g., a giant orange/apple). In group discussion children are reflected on their ideas and their feelings about their cooperation during the play.



Activity 3: Into to sea	
<i>Setting</i>	Indoor in a room with enough space for movement or Outdoor
<i>Material checklist</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A big blue piece of fabric (3x3 meters) ● Bell ball or balloon with a bell ● Music (e.g., Four seasons of Vivaldi)
<i>Pedagogical Strategies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Playful activity ● Music ● Dance and movement activity ● Individual activity
<i>Extending RESILIENT PRESCHOOLS Curriculum</i>	Module 4. Positive Relationships
<i>Duration</i>	10'
Introducing the activity (Duration: 2 min)	Following the previous activity with the whole team gathered, the teacher brings to the team a big blue piece of fabric, "the sea". Each child has to catch the fabric and all stand around the "sea". In the center of the fabric-sea there is a bell ball, the "boat". Children move the fabric up and down. Their movements are the "waves".
Activity (Duration: 5 min)	Children have to cooperate and synchronize their movements-waves, so that the boat sails in the sea. The "waves" could be small and gradually become bigger. They have to be careful and don't let the boat-ball fall out of the fabric "get to the shore".
Conclusion (Duration: 3 min)	At the end the team slowly brought the boat to the shore and let the fabric down. Everyone sits down in a circle, holds hands and passes a smile around the circle. They start with one child and have them "pass" a smile to the next person, going around the circle. The smile has to come back to the person who started. If time allows, they can share a smile again in the other direction around the circle.
Material for homework exercises	Children can give smiles to family members at home or to friends or teachers in school, or even to people they don't know very well. Parents and children can discuss at home about a moment that they might feel happy and share a smile. They can think and discuss if it feels good to give a smile to someone.
Evaluation methodology	<p>During the implementation of the activities, the teacher observes if a child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – could find a pair – could communicate with others





- felt comfortable to interact with others

The teacher can also take photos of children individually, in pairs, in groups and make copies for them, so that they can keep them in their portfolio to remember their experiences.



Lesson 3: Promoting healthy interpersonal relationships

Lesson Overview:

This lesson includes two activities aiming to foster healthy interpersonal relationships in the classroom. Through these activities the child will learn how to accept diversity, share and cooperate with others in order to build and maintain healthy interpersonal relationships.

Objectives

At the end of the lesson children would be able to:

- Active engage in group activities
- Create interpersonal relationships
- Identify the characteristics of their classmates
- Play in pairs
- Maintain healthy interpersonal relationships

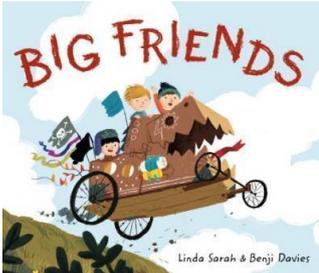
“Warm up” activity

The teacher introduces the children to this lesson with a game labeled “The sculptor and the sculpture”. In this activity everyone is sitting in the whole-group circle. The teacher calls two children, one of them will be the sculptor and the other the sculpture. The team decides about the theme of the sculptures (e.g., jobs). The sculpture is motionless, and the sculptor should make the shape of the sculpture (head, arms, legs, expressions on the face and make a traffic policeman, a dancer, a fisherman, a woodcutter, a football player or a hero). The members of the team imagine and discuss what the sculpture is.



Activity 1: Drawing a friend	
<i>Setting</i>	Worktables
<i>Material checklist</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pieces of papers with colored frames in pairs (e.g., two red, two yellows etc.) ● Markers, crayons ● Glue ● Slow music
<i>Pedagogical Strategies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Activity in pairs ● Drawings ● Group discussion
<i>Extending RESILIENT PRESCHOOLS Curriculum</i>	Module 4. Positive Relationships
<i>Duration</i>	20'
Introducing the activity (Duration: 5 min)	The teacher shares a piece of paper with a colored frame to each child. The frames in pairs have the same color. As long as the music plays, each child seeks for his/her pair based on his/her color frame. When each child finds his/her pair, they dance together. When the music stops, they sit at the working tables.
Activity (Duration: 15 min)	The teacher encourages children to observe his/her pair. Each pair is presented in the class. For example, <i>she has a mouth with red/pink lips, a small nose, two blue eyes, black hair</i> etc. Then, each child draws his pair in the colored frame.
Conclusion (Duration: 5 min)	The drawings are collected and composed in a poster/collage. The teacher and children discuss the title of their artwork and the place where it will be settled.



Activity 2: STOP! Take a photo!	
<i>Setting</i>	Whole-group circle
<i>Material checklist</i>	Optional camera
<i>Pedagogical Strategies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Drama● Activity in pairs/team
<i>Extending RESILIENT PRESCHOOLS Curriculum</i>	Module 4. Positive Relationships
<i>Duration</i>	20'
Introducing the activity (Duration: 5 min)	Everyone is sitting in the whole-group circle. The teacher asks children to make expressions with their faces e.g., a happy face, an angry face, a sad face etc.
Activity (Duration: 15 min)	The teacher calls a child and asks to present with his/her body a move (e.g., pretend that he is drinking an imaginary glass of water). Then, he/she remains motionless. Another child comes to the circle and must complete the movement (e.g., pretend that he/she is a waitress with a kind smile offering the imaginary glass of water to the previous child). When the two children complete the imaginary picture, they stay motionless. Then the rest of the team shout "STOP! Take a photo" and they pretend to take photos of the children- "statues". The pairs are changed. Gradually, the teacher can call for a third or a fourth child to continue the picture or even the whole class to take a group picture.
Conclusion	The teacher can take actual photos of the children, discuss, and share their emotions and feelings. The teacher can also make copies for them, so that they can keep them in their portfolio to remember their experiences.
Material for homework exercises	As a homework exercise children can read with their parents the book "Big Friends" by Linda Sarah & Benji Davies" (also available in https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NVCoi57qkOw&t=64s) and discuss about the importance of having healthy relationships, include and make new friend. 



**Evaluation
methodology**

During the implementation of the activities, the teacher observes and keeps notes about the degree each child could efficiently communicate and cooperate in the team. In addition, the teacher can observe if the children maintain their relationship after the implementation of the activities.



Lesson 4: Practicing kindness

Lesson Overview:

Positive relationships are promoted through the development of the strength of kindness. This lesson includes two activities aiming to make children aware about what kindness is. Children will be involved in activities that will help them to recognize the kind words that someone uses, some potential acts of kindness and finally practice kindness with others.

Objectives

At the end of the lesson children would be able to:

- Be aware about what kindness is
- Recognize the kind words that someone and use
- Using smiles as positive verbal conduct in relationships with others
- Practice good and kind deeds and enjoying the acts themselves

“Warm up” activity

In the whole-group circle the teacher encourages children to do the activity of sharing smiles (module 4, lesson 2, activity 3). Then, the teacher asks children to tell if they remembered to smile to friends or someone in their family, if someone shared a smile with them and how they felt. Smile encourages “happiness for all people”.



Activity 1: Sweet words	
<i>Setting</i>	Whole-group circle
<i>Material checklist</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Pieces of papers● Markers, crayons● Glue● Cardboard
<i>Pedagogical Strategies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Group discussion● Brainstorming● Artifacts● Group activity
<i>Extending RESILIENT PRESCHOOLS Curriculum</i>	Module 4. Positive Relationships
<i>Duration</i>	30'
Introducing the activity (Duration: 10 min)	In the whole-group circle the teacher and children discuss about the importance of being kind and polite with others. Teacher encourages children to think, how we can ask for something politely, which kind of words we can use, which would be an appropriate kind posture. "There are always nice and kind ways to talk to someone even if he/she makes us upset".
Activity (Duration: 10 min)	Through brainstorming children refer to kind words that someone can use. All the kind words are written on paper candies and are placed on a paper jar "the jar with the sweet and kind words". A poster is designed with the paper jar including the paper candies. Possible kind words for the candies: "I am sorry", "Thank you", "Please", "Would you like to be friends?", "I love you", "I forgive you", "Can I...?", "I would like...", "Can you bring me ..., please?", "Here you are" etc.
Conclusion (Duration: 10 min)	Each child takes a sweet with a kind word from the jar and tries to write the sweet word on a board. Or depends on the selected sweet from the jar each child practices on making sweet oral sentences. For example, instead of saying "I want my ball right now!", they can say "Can you please pass me the ball? Or: "Hey you! What's the time?": Please, can you tell me the time? "Waaater!": Can you give me some water, please?



Activity 2: Smile, please!	
<i>Setting</i>	Whole-group circle
<i>Material checklist</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Several objectives e.g., toys, storybooks, markers etc.
<i>Pedagogical Strategies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Role-playing• Group discussion
<i>Extending RESILIENT PRESCHOOLS Curriculum</i>	Module 4. Positive Relationships
<i>Duration</i>	20'
Introducing the activity (Duration: 5 min)	Following the previous activity, the teacher encourages children to play a game in order to practice being kind to each other.
Activity (Duration: 15 min)	Each child should complete a “friendly request” by completing a series of tasks: ask for things politely and with a smile, fix their gazes on one another, adopt an appropriate posture and give thanks. All of the children will have an object (a toy, a book...) except one. This child will have to ask one of his or her classmates with a friendly and polite request. The classmate will give the object to the child only if the request has been carried out kindly and with a smile. If this is not done, the object-less children must start over, asking this time a different classmate. Once the child obtains the desired object, the person who has relinquished his/her object must in turn ask another classmate the same question, all the while complying with the “friendly request” in order to obtain the desired object. Each time a request that follows the rules is executed, that children will be applauded by all the classmates.
Conclusion	The game will end when all the children have accomplished the task.
Material for homework exercises	Parents can make a “family kindness jar” at home. The kindness jar can contain acts of kindness that anyone can do. Family members can discuss what they can do for others and encourage children to start thinking about ways they can show kindness to others. Possible simple acts of kindness could be the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Send a neighbor a thank you note• Give someone a hug• Bring flowers to your teacher• Collect books for the library





	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Donate food to the homeless shelter● Smile at someone● Hold the door for someone● Donate a toy to a toy drive● Feed the birds● Bake dessert for a neighbor● Tell someone how much you love them● Say thank you to the cashier in the supermarket
Evaluation methodology	After the implementation of the activities, the teacher has to ensure that on a daily basis children get used to asking for things politely, being kind, saying thanks afterwards, and bringing it to their attention when they forget to do it. How do you ask for it? (“Please”), What do you say now? (“Thanks”).



Lesson 5: Understanding Forgiveness

Lesson Overview:

Forgiveness helps to repair relationships, thus promoting cooperation. This lesson includes an activity aiming to make children aware about what forgiveness is and its importance for promoting positive relationships.

Objectives

At the end of the lesson children would be able to:

- Be aware and understanding the importance of asking for forgiveness and of forgiving

“Warm up” activity

As a warm-up activity teacher read a story about forgiveness; how and why to say sorry. For example, possible books with related content could be the following:

I'm Sorry! by Barry Timm

Sorry! by Landa Norbert

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cRiprMov4gk>)

Activity 1: I'm Sorry – I Forgive You

Setting

Whole-group circle

- Cards showing different situations



Material checklist



Pictures retrieved from: <https://www.istockphoto.com>



<i>Pedagogical Strategies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Group discussion● Case studies – scenarios
<i>Extending RESILIENT PRESCHOOLS Curriculum</i>	Module 4. Positive Relationships
<i>Duration</i>	20'
Introducing the activity (Duration: 5 min)	By reading a story about forgiveness, children become aware that sometimes children and adults alike get something wrong or suffer from the mistakes made by others. When this happens it is better to apologize and ask for forgiveness or accept and forgive those who have wronged us. "Asking for forgiveness and forgiving helps to create and maintain positive relationships with others".
Activity (Duration: 15 min)	<p>Children are shown cards that contain different situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● A girl is throwing sand at other classmates.● A boy has tripped another who has fallen to the ground.● A girl destroys what other children have built.● A boy feels bad because someone has taken his cards.● A girl feels hurt because her friend has shouted at her. <p>Once the pupils have seen and identified the scenes on the cards, they have to comment, analyze and evaluate in small groups their specific card and verbalize what has to be done in every situation: "to forgive" or "to ask for forgiveness", and express which would be the most appropriate way to act. Then, when they have come to an agreement, the teacher invite the children to think of similar situations they have experienced in their life.</p>
Material for homework exercises	Every family reads a story about forgiveness and represents what they have learned in different ways, for example by designing a poster, making a drawing, writing a personal letter etc. Each child brings the book to the class and presents to their classmates what he/she has done with his/her family at home. All the materials produced by the children and their parents are gathered, and a book about forgiveness is compiled.
Evaluation methodology	The teacher should take advantage of situations that present in daily school life in order to address and work around these problematic situations in class. The aim is to make children realize that the most important thing is assuming responsibility for their actions or the benefit of oneself and others.



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