

Intervention methodology in a multifamily group of families with children between 6 and 8 years

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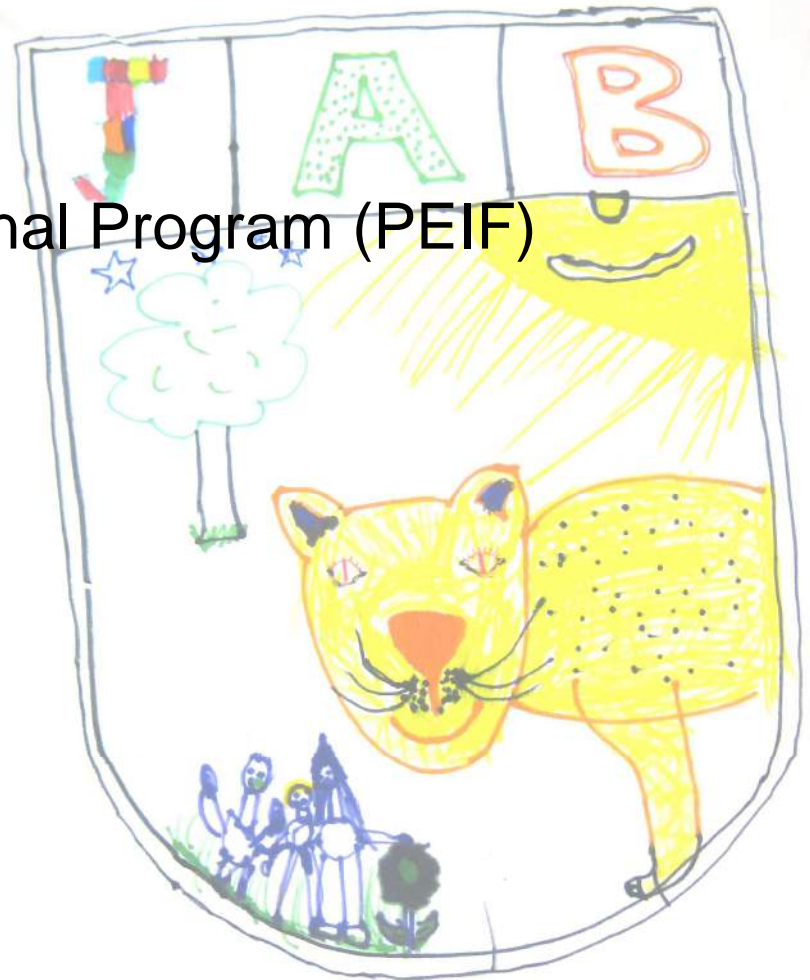


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Multifamily groups, parenting support, psychoeducational resources, communication processes, ethnographic research

Institutional context

- Sant Just Desvern city council.
- 0-6 Network.
- Childhood and Family Educational Program (PEIF) by ICE UAB.
- Learning Together Project.
- BES professionals.
- ERIFE researchers.



Objectives and contents of the investigated project

- Some objectives
 - Generate a space of **caring**.
 - Promote a conscious and active **participation**.
 - Facilitate an integral family **growth**.
 - Foment the creation and strengthening of **relations** between families.

- Some contents
 - The participants' lived **experiences**.
 - Families **educational styles**.
 - Children's and parents' **changes**.
 - Mothers' and fathers' **fears**.
 - Family **leisure time**.



Other relevant information

- Participant and informant families
 - 10 families with children between 6 i 8 years.
 - no presence of great psycho-affective difficulties, although some families are derived from social services and special educational services.
- Sessions
 - 9 (8 + 1) 90 minute sessions.
 - 2 editions.

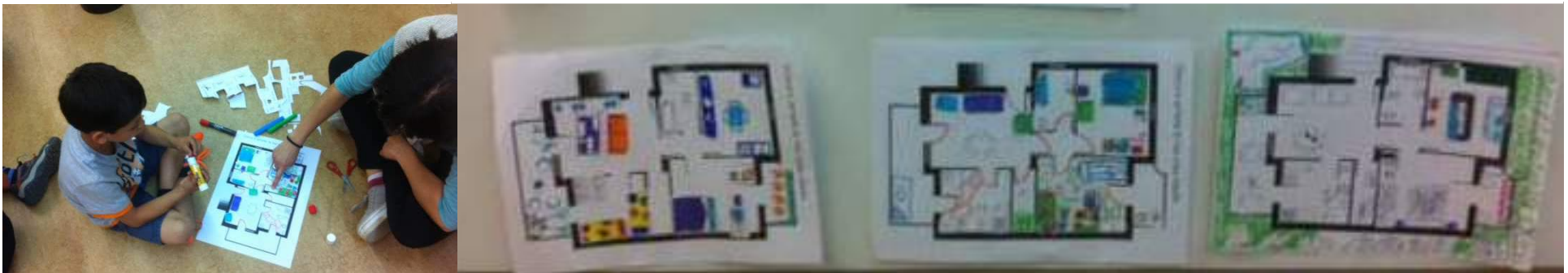


Research aims

- Investigate about the **communication between parents and children.**
 - Collect **psycho-educational resources** for these types of interventions.
 - Evaluate how participation in such programs **transforms the relationship** between parents and children.
 - Asses the **benefits** that participants get from **multifamily groups.**
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Methodology

- Features:
 - Ecological approach.
 - Conducting and observing double device.
 - Information triangulation: different instruments, different informants.
- Instruments:
 - Registration of each session.
 - Interview to a participant mother.
 - Group-analysis device benefits scale (Yalom, 2000).
 - Some "activities" for session evaluating.



Ethical issues

- Consideration of children's contributions in **equal value** to the adults'.
- Frame of information **confidentiality** before, along and after the program.
- Researchers manifest interest not to know the prior families' diagnostics to **avoid conditioning their eyes.**



Multifamily groups' benefits

- Space of action and **relationship** both for children and adults.
- Parents have the opportunity of **observing** their children in action, outside the family sphere.
- Adults can **share**, within a framework of reliability, their experience of educating and growing their children; with other families' adults, and with professionals.
- Promotes a type of experiential **learning** from which a person changes its thinking, feelings and actions for having been and getting in contact with others.

«I'd fully recommend other families to participate. It is a continuous learning about the relationships between parents and children. I think at least a year is necessary for everyone». (adult)

«I really enjoyed playing. Daddies are very important. I would like to come next year, thanks a lot». (children)

«I think every member of the family can enjoy it in a different way. It helps to discover children's reactions they don't have at home». (adult)



Communication between parents and children

- Mostly ambiguous, with **contradictory messages** and double bind.
- Parental communicative ambivalence generates an **injury to the self-esteem** of many children, as they do not know what their parents expect of them and how to please them.
- The device facilitates the development of a **functional and creative communication** between parents and children.
- The practice of **attentive and aware listening** is also promoted. Listening needed of the "primordial silence".



«I liked to share. I didn't like to talk about some things [emotions]. I liked a lot what has been explained here. Children do the same as daddies».
(children)

«It is a space to share life experiences with your child. Without waiting, or rather, without expectation, things happen that make you think and get closer to your child». (adult)

«Communication between the couple and the children is all together. Now we leave the mobile phone in the receiver and this allows us to be more present, spend more time and be more conscious of the need of communication with our children; looking at their face». (adult)

Psychoeducational resources

- **Interview** for presentation and diagnosis. Also for **expectations adjustment**.
- Activities of **daily life**.
- **Ad-hoc selfconstructed materials** to structure the family culture, based on what families bring into the sessions and the situations that occur along the group functioning.
- Active participation in the **construction of space and activities**.

- Some resources:

- "When I was the age of my son (name) ..." - "when I'm older as my father/mother ..."
- Family flag.
- Family life line.
- A specific goal: MY relationship with my child. To be explained in front of them and evidence how parents take care.
- Parents' games when they were child.
- Children's activities that are presented to their parents (moments of separated adult-children activity).
- The ideal house.
- Adults: self-presentation from the eyes of their parents.
- My son's limits.



«I really liked the created dynamics, remembering and retrieving experiences, feelings and sensations as a child, to help me understand the evolutionary moment of my son. Also the atmosphere and climate of the group have been wonderful to share experiences. Thank you!!!». (adult)

«I really enjoyed that the parents explained things that happen to them when they were kids». (child)

«The mirror effect is stunning, especially in surprising activities. Mirror where we not always like to see reflected». (adult)

Relationship transformation between parents and children

- The sessions' dynamics and environment help participants to see their healthy parts and their potential as parents and as sons. Likewise it helps on those less healthy aspects of their experience and acting, and generates **resources for healing** those psychoaffective damaged elements.
- The relationships established within a group of these features are very representative of the types of relations that the participants maintain outside the group (isomorphism) and thereby their outside **relationships can be reconstructed**.

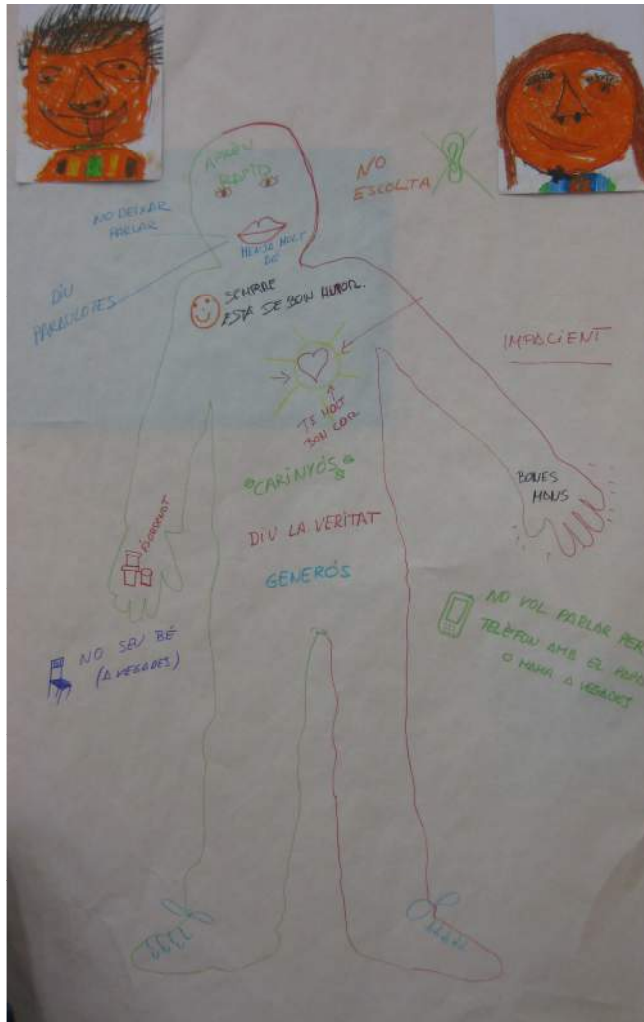
«The program has helped me to see interpersonal relationships from another point of view, and break routine conviviality patterns». (adult)

«Learning together has allowed me to think about important aspects of my relationship with my children. Sometimes certain bonds and relationships are established in family dynamics that lead us to act with rigidity and vitiate behaviors». (adult)

«To dedicate time and space to our son without interference or rush is what I most value of Learning Together. I also had the opportunity to express, review and discover mother-child relationship aspects in the not always easy task as parents». (adult)



Conclusions and implications



- **Thinking towards existential matters.**
- Aspects coincidentally rated for adults and children:
 - Group cohesion.
 - Development of socialization techniques.
 - Reviewing aspects of their own lives.
- Other aspects valued by adults:
 - Transmission of information (concepts, perspectives, techniques) amongst participants.
 - Unselfish collaboration between people.
 - Sensations and feelings expression.
 - Reviewing primary family group aspects.
 - Universality of the human fact.
- **Relationship empowerment and community projection** towards preventing and treating some difficulties in the accompaniment to **positive parenting**.
- Illuminate the local or regional governments' decisions about **parenting accompaniment policies**.
- Brings closer the research and intervention methodologies used in **the clinical and the socio-educational fields**.

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Thank you

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