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Lessonplan English

CARE-ACTIVITIES IN FRIENDSHIPS

IMPRESSUM

ECaRoM Handreichung - Materialien und Methoden für die geschlechterelexive Arbeit mit Kindern in der Elementar- und Primarstufe zum Thema bezahlte und unbezahlte Sorgearbeit. Diese Handreichung wurde im Rahmen des Projekts ECaRoM – Early Care and the Role of Men/ Förderung Sorgeorientierter Männlichkeiten in der frühen Erziehung und Bildung erarbeitet. Mehr Informationen zum Projekt finden sich unter: www.ecarom.eu

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Lessonplan English

Care-Activities in Friendships

What defines a friendship?

How do children show that they care about each other?

What do gender stereotypes have to do with this?

Friendship is often defined by unspoken behaviours and qualities that we appreciate in the other person. Sometimes even adults struggle to put this into words, yet many of us need pleasant relationships with others for a fulfilling and enjoyable life. Children orientate on adults to model their friendship, but girls* and boys* have different role models when it comes to social relations and therefore, they form their attachments differently.

In this lesson, children reflect upon the topic of friendship and their relationships to other children. They are presented with an opportunity to discover what they consider important in their connections to others and how positive social interactions can help them overcome struggles and difficult situations.



Lessonplan English

Grade: Starting at 2nd grade of primary school

Place: Classroom

Group Size: Any size is possible

Length: 1-2 lesson(s)

Learning Goals:

- Expanding children's vocabulary in English
- Talking and reflecting upon the topic of friendship

1. Information

1.1. Gender stereotypes among children

Men* and women* are raised to follow different gender stereotypes and behaviours from an early age on. The behaviour of girls* is often portrayed as warm, caring and relation oriented. Communication skills and collaboration are often interpreted into their playing behaviour as well as into other behavioural patterns and they are also encouraged to do so.¹

These stereotypes also result in boys* being granted less or little room to express their emotions and feelings already early on in their childhood. They encounter punishment when they don't fulfil the ideals of masculinity. This means that boys* learn to suppress sensitive and caring aspects of their personality. Instead, they are expected to perform in a more traditionally masculine way and display a behaviour shaped by taking risks, ambition, and a sense of power, in order to be respected by their peers.² Amongst other factors, it is the acceptance of the aforementioned behaviours that leads to issues in the later life of many men* (for instance, a higher risk of being exposed to violence or to become violent themselves).³

¹ Cf. Scambor, E. & Gärtner, M. (2019) p. 13ff.

² Cf. Scambor, E. & Gärtner, M. (2019) p. 13ff.

³ Cf. Scambor, E. & Wojnicka, K. & Bergmann, N. (2013) p. 104ff.

1.2. Caring Masculinities

The concept of Caring Masculinities aims to move away from the image of the men* being the strong breadwinner (and thus, leader) of the family towards being a more caring member of the family. This doesn't only include unpaid care work like household chores, parenting and childcare but also paid jobs in the care sector, e.g., kindergarten teacher, nurse or caregiver. Caring Masculinities also encompasses values like empathy, awareness and shared responsibility as well as an active advocacy against violence and male dominance.⁴ All genders can benefit from this concept.

Men* are able to act in a kind, considerate and respectful manner. However, in many minds this possibility is less established than the image of a caring mother or a devoted woman*. To move away from this narrow perception of gender, it is essential to work with children of all genders on alternative images of masculinities (e.g., Caring Masculinities) and femininities.

To reflect upon their feelings and to understand what makes their relationships with others valuable and important, is an important part of a child's learning journey. This applies equally to working with boys* and all other children, because the resistance that boys* and children have to overcome, when acting outside of traditional gender norms, can come at them from all sides.

1.3. Possible reactions to standard beliefs and comments

"Boys/girls don't do this."

For a long time, people believed that only girls* would enjoy certain activities and that boys* only liked different activities. There are still adults who believe that. But this doesn't mean, that we must think like this forever. When your parents were children, people still had different ideas from today about what a boy* should do and what a girl* should do. Such beliefs change.

"I don't want hugs, I'm not a small child anymore."

Most people need physical contact (e.g., touching each other) in order to feel good. Many adults and especially men* forget how nice and relaxing it can feel to get a hug or to cuddle with somebody else.

⁴ Cf. Scambor, E. & Gärtner, M. (2020) p. 13ff.

You can also pet an animal when you're feeling sad, and this will make you feel better. Before hugging or cuddling with another person you should always make sure, that it is ok for the two of you. Just ask.

"Girls cry all the time/Boys shouldn't cry."

All people and all children cry sometimes, especially when they are sad, angry or sometimes even when they are happy. These feelings can mean a lot of stress and crying is a way of expressing this and finding relief. When children become older, they learn how to control their feelings and tears. This is of course useful but also not only positive – emotions don't go away just because you learn to suppress them. Crying is like laughing. There is nothing wrong with it and it can even be good for you.

"Boys only want to play soccer."

Different children enjoy different activities. Some boys* really like playing soccer but there are usually also other things they enjoy: riding a bike, reading a book, or playing with their friends. All children can play and like soccer. What we like the best is often also something we already know and are good at. If you started playing soccer in kindergarten you will probably be much better at it than another child who started playing in school. This has nothing to do with boy* or girl*, tall or small, blue or brown eyes.

2. Implementation

Activity 1

Activity: Listening to the song

Length: 5min

Materials: Computer + speakers for playing the song or an accompanying instrument (e.g., piano or guitar)

Learning goals: listening to the song, getting to know the lyrics (getting used to the sound of English, listening comprehension, repetition of simple vocabulary)

The teacher explains that the class will listen to an English song about friendship and plays the song to the class.

Lyrics:

Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend,
Alex is my friend because he cares for me.

He **comforts** me, he comforts me,
because he is my friend and really cares for me.

Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend,
Alex is my friend because he cares for me.

He **plays** with me, he plays with me,
because he is my friend and really cares for me.

Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend,
Alex is my friend because he cares for me.

He **helps** me, he helps me,
because he is my friend and really cares for me.

Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend
because he cares for me.

He **listens** to me, he listens to me,
because he is my friend and really cares for me.

Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend
because he cares for me.

He **shares** with me, he shares with me,
because he is my friend and really cares for me.

Activity 2

Activity: Status of the children

Length: 5min

Materials: none (maybe a blackboard)

Learning goals: Checking and verifying one's own knowledge and identifying gaps

The teacher asks the children the following questions:

Which words do you already know?

Which words did you understand?

The words that are familiar to the children can be written on the blackboard and thus are made visible.

Activity 3

Activity: Learning the song and moving along

Length: 15min

Materials: Computer + speakers for playing the song or an accompanying instrument (e.g., piano or guitar)

Learning goals: learning the movements to the song (better understanding through physical movement), getting to know the lyrics (building up basic vocabulary about friendship and relationships)

The teacher plays the song again and shows the corresponding movements. After each movement he*she asks the children which new word he*she just acted out.

The teacher repeats the new word in English and asks children to repeat the movement while repeating the new word.

1. "He **comforts** me, he comforts me."
Hugging each other, or oneself as a symbol
2. "He **plays** with me, he plays with me"
Moving hands as if playing with a ball, little dolls, Lego, etc.
3. "He **helps** me, he helps me"
Extending both hands forward helpfully
4. "He **listens** to me, he listens to me"
Putting one's hand behind the ear
5. "He **shares** with me, he shares with me"
Pretending to break something (like a sandwich) in half with your hands

Activity 4

Activit: Talking about friendship

Length: 20min

Materials: none

Learning goals: reflecting upon living with others in a community (like a class)/relations to other children, observing one's own behaviour

Together with all children the teacher discusses the following questions (in native language):

- What do all of these words have in common? (They are care activities)
- How do you feel when somebody listens to you or comforts you?
- Do you think that Alex is a good friend?
- What do you like doing with your friends?
- What do you like about your friends?
- Is it different when you are friends with a boy* or a girl*?
- Do boys* and girls* have different friendships? Why?
- Do boys* need different friendships than girls*?
- Who listens to you when you are sad? Who comforts you?
- Do you listen to other people when they feel sad? Do you comfort others?

To conclude, the class listens to the song/ sings the song again (with movements).

Activity 5 (Version 1)

Activity: Drawings (age 5-8)

Length: 15min

Materials: Worksheet 1

Learning goals: repetition of new vocabulary

The teacher hands out the worksheet.

1. Children circle the new words in the lyrics.
2. They colour in the drawings and write the correct words (comfort, play, help, listen to, share with) beneath the images in their native language.

To conclude, the class listens to the song again (with movements).

Activity 5 (Version 2)

Activity: Drawings (age 8-10)

Length: 15min

Materials: Worksheet 2

Learning goals: reading comprehension, repetition of new vocabulary

The teacher hands out the worksheet.

1. Children complete the text with the five activities Alex does in a friendship and they add one new verse. If it is too difficult for the children, they can do it in groups or the whole class together thinks of one new care activity.
2. Children cut out the new words (comfort, play, help, listen to, share with) and glue them under the correct images.

To conclude, the class listens to the song again (with movements).

Concluding activity

Concluding activity: My friends

Length: 20min/homework

Materials: none

Learning goals: writing short sentences; reflecting on the topic of friendship

Children write down (in English or the native language) five sentences about what they value in their friends. Alternatively, during a final oral round, each child can give an example of what they value in their own friendship.

Further information about the lyrics:

The name “Alex” was chosen for this song because it can serve as a gender-neutral name. The song also wants to emphasise the necessity of caring about each other and being thoughtful to each other’s needs in a friendship, especially among boys*. For this reason, the pronoun “he” was chosen for Alex.

You can also sing the song in such a way, that the children in the class choose a different name of a classmate in each verse. Additionally, together with the children, new care activities that are important in a friendship can be sought. These can then be incorporated into the song in additional verses. In this way, children from the class can be sung to directly and can get connected with their special qualities they bring to a friendship.

The song can also be used in an introduction to the topic of non-binary children and serve as a point of identification for non-binary children.

3. Further topics

- Emotions and feelings
- Touching, physical contact and consent
- Gender (stereotypes): boys*, girls*, non-binary children
- Care professions
- Paid and unpaid care work

4. Further information/reading (Literature & Links)

- Ibob: <https://portal.ibobb.at>
- Eduthek: <https://eduthek.at>
- Boys Day: <https://www.boysday.at>
- Boys in Care: <https://www.boys-in-care.eu>
- Ecarom: <https://ecarom.eu>

5. Children’s books about the topics of friendship/emotions/consent

- Big Boys Cry – by Jonty Howley
- Don’t Hug Doug: (He Doesn’t Like It) – by Carrie Finison
- How to apologize – by David LaRochelle
- The Shadow Elephant – by Nadine Robert
- Ein Junge wie du – by Frank Murphy & Kayla Harren (Illustration)
- Sei ein ganzer Kerl⁵ – von Jessica Sanders
- Paul und Papa – by Susanne Weber
- Der Junge im Rock – by Kerstin Brichzin & Igor Kuprin

⁵ For the english Version (Be your own man) is a workbook online available: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b59395670e802c9d0072990/t/5f5e978d88ce6e3f57844aed/1600034727650/BYOM_StudentWorkbook_HR.pdf

6. Sources

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- Scambor, Elli & Gärtner, Marc (Hg.) (2019). Boys in Care - Jungen* stärken bei der Wahl eines sozialen, erzieherischen oder pflegerischen Berufs - Ein Handbuch für pädagogische Fachkräfte und Multiplikator*innen für geschlechterreflektierende Berufsorientierung. <https://www.vmg-steiermark.at/de/boysday-burschenarbeit-forschung/publikation/boys-care-jungen-staerken-bei-der-wahl-eines-sozialen>
- Scambor, Elli & Wojnicka, Katarzyna & Bergmann, Nadja (ed.) (2013). The role of men in gender equality: European strategies & insights. Luxemburg, Publications Office of the European Union. <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/f6f90d59-ac4f-442f-be9b-32c3bd36eaf1/language-en>

7. Attachments

7.1. Sheet music and lyrics

Alex is my friend

Veronika Suppan
Lisa Wagner

The sheet music is written in 4/4 time and consists of three staves. The first staff contains the first line of music with lyrics: "A - lex is my friend, A - lex is my friend, A - lex is my friend be - cause he". The second staff contains the second line of music with lyrics: "cares for me. He com - forts me, he com - forts me, be -". The third staff contains the third line of music with lyrics: "cause he is my friend and real - ly cares for me." Chords are indicated above the notes: C, C, C, G, C, F, C, F, C, F, G, C.

1. Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend,
Alex is my friend because he **cares** for me.
He **comforts** me, he comforts me,
because he is my friend and really cares for me.
2. Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend,
Alex is my friend because he cares for me.
He **plays** with me, he plays with me,
because he is my friend and really cares for me.
3. Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend,
Alex is my friend because he cares for me.
He **helps** me, he helps me,
because he is my friend and really cares for me.
4. Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend
because he **cares** for me.
He **listens** to me, he listens to me,
because he is my friend and really cares for me.
5. Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend
because he **cares** for me.
He **shares** with me, he shares with me,
because he is my friend and really cares for me.

7.2. Worksheet 1

Task: Circle the new words from the song.

1. Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend,
Alex is my friend because he cares for me.
He comforts me, he comforts me,
because he is my friend and really cares for me.

2. Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend,
Alex is my friend because he cares for me.
He plays with me, he plays with me,
because he is my friend and really cares for me.

3. Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend,
Alex is my friend because he cares for me.
He helps me, he helps me,
because he is my friend and really cares for me.

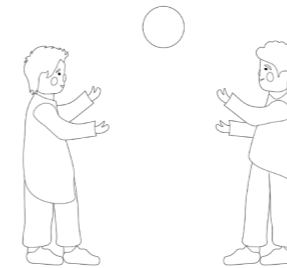
4. Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend
because he cares for me.
He listens to me, he listens to me,
because he is my friend and really cares for me.

5. Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend
because he cares for me.
He shares with me, he shares with me,
because he is my friend and really cares for me.

Task: Write the correct words in your first language under each drawing and colour in the pictures.



comfort



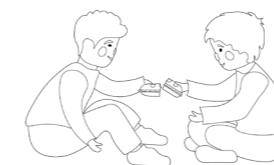
play



help



listen



share

7.3. Worksheet 2

Task: What five activities does Alex do in a friendship?
Add the words from the song.


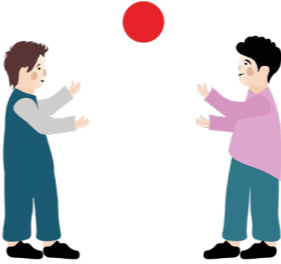



1. Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend because he cares for me. He _____, he _____, because he is my friend and really cares for me.
2. Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend because he cares for me. He _____, he _____, because he is my friend and really cares for me.
3. Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend because he cares for me. He _____, he _____, because he is my friend and really cares for me.
4. Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend because he cares for me. He _____, he _____, because he is my friend and really cares for me.
5. Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend, Alex is my friend because he cares for me. He _____, he _____, because he is my friend and really cares for me.

Task: What are you doing with your friends?
Add the name of your friend and think about an activity you like to do with this friend.

_____ is my friend, _____ is my friend, _____ is my friend because he cares for me.

He _____, he _____, because he is my friend and really cares for me.

Task: Cut out the English word and glue it next to the correct drawing.

	trösten		<input type="text"/>
	spielen		<input type="text"/>
	helfen		<input type="text"/>
	zuhören		<input type="text"/>
	teilen		<input type="text"/>

comfort

play

help

listen

share

✂

7.4. Pictures of the five care activities from the song

Illustrated by Laura Bachmayr



Download the attachments:

<https://www.vmg-steiermark.at/de/forschung/ecarom>

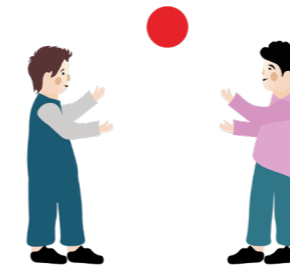


Care Activities in a friendship



trösten

comfort



spielen

play



helfen

help



zuhören

listen



teilen

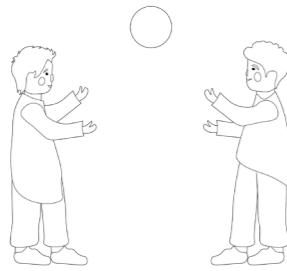
share

Care Activities in a friendship



trösten

comfort



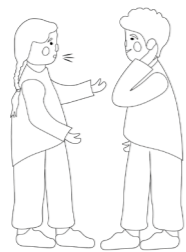
spielen

play



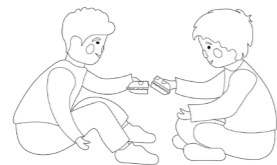
helfen

help



zuhören

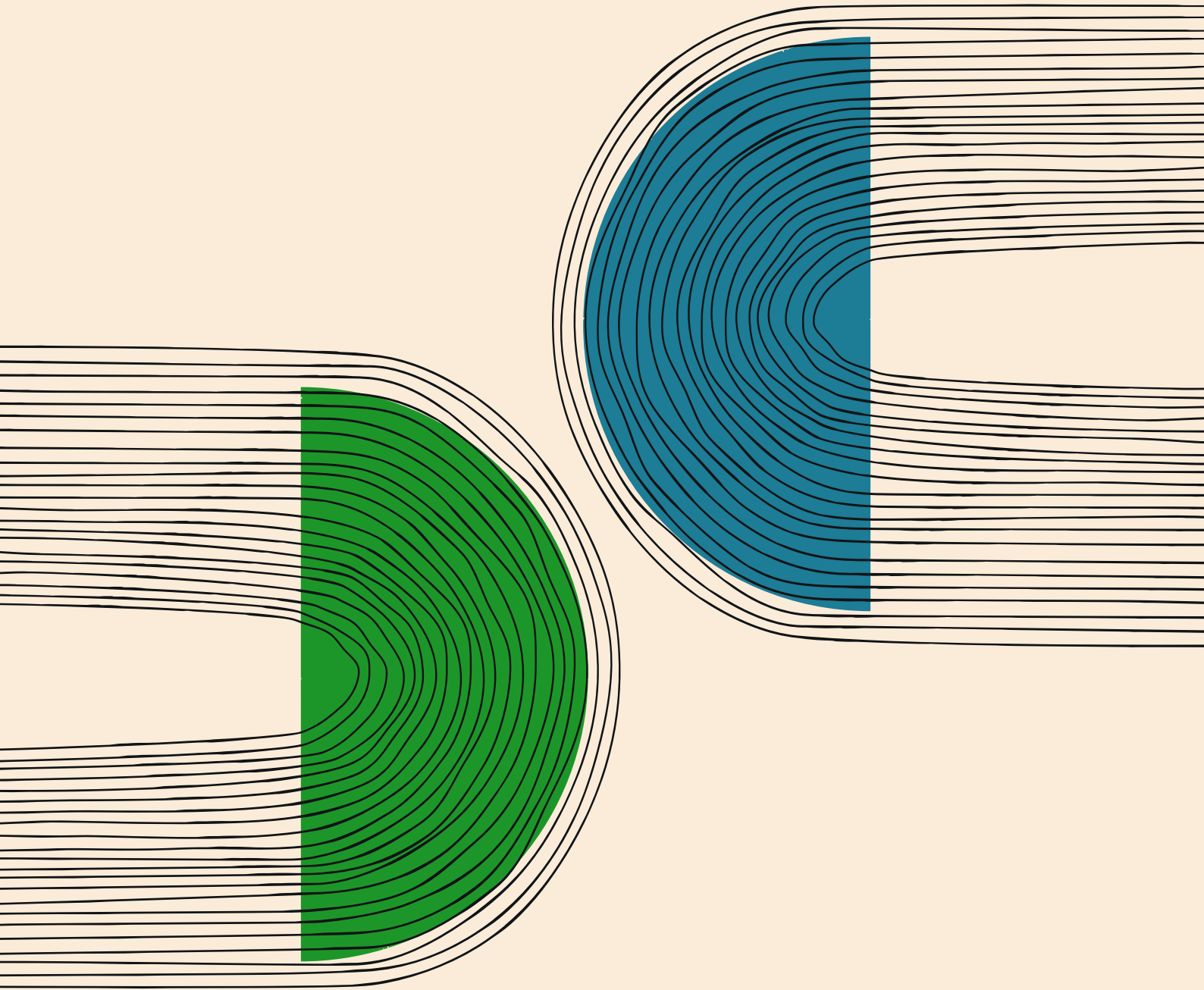
listen



teilen

share





ECaRoM – Early Care and the Role of Men

Förderung Sorgeorientierter Männlichkeiten in der frühen Erziehung und Bildung

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