

## **GREECE (Theme 6):**

### **Turning Challenges into Opportunities (Tough mindedness)**

#### **Sub-theme 2:**

**Dealing with rejection and managing related unpleasant emotions such as stress, anger, disappointment, frustration, sadness, sense of helplessness.**

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**Set of Activities 1: Dealing with rejection by peers and managing related emotions.**

**Set of Activities 2: Dealing with rejection by teachers and managing related emotions.**

**Set of Activities 3: Dealing with rejection by family members and managing related emotions.**

### **Set 1: Dealing with Rejection by peers and managing unpleasant emotions**

#### **Learning Goals**

**By the end of this unit, children will be able to:**

### Early Years (3-5 years)

- Recognize and verbalize the feelings caused by rejection and understand that it is normal to feel like that.
- Utilize positive talking when faced with rejection activities.
- Recognize incidents of rejection in daily life and be able to share their own experiences of rejection and reflect of some course of action to deal with the situation.

### Early Primary (6-8 years)

- Recognize incidents of rejection in daily life and be able to share their own experiences of rejection while also offering a course of action.
- Recognize incidents of rejection in daily life, share their own experiences of rejection, understand that everybody can be rejected in different ways and reflect on possible actions to deal with rejection.
- Reframe the experience of rejection into a different (positive) perspective and take distance from it, so they can deal with it more efficiently.

### Late Primary (9-11)

- Reframe the experience of rejection into a different (positive) perspective and take distance from it, so they can deal with it more efficiently.
- Be inspired by famous people who despite rejections they faced, they eventually endured and overcome adversity.
- Able to conceptualize rejection as a challenge and eventually turn the rejection into a growth experience.

## Activity 1: Billy the hedgehog's search for a friend

### *Learning Goal*

Children will be able to recognize and verbalise the feelings caused by rejection and understand that it is normal to feel like that.

***Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:***

Recognize the value of persistence in face of rejection and the value of thinking positively in order to deal with rejection.

***Age Group***

Early Years

***Level***

Basic

***Materials needed***

Hand puppet of hedgehog.

***Activity Steps***

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read this story to the children using hand puppets (hedgehog):

***“ The hedgehog with the broken spikes”***

Once upon a time, there was a **hedgehog** named Billy who lived in the forest. Billy was happy and loved to play games with the other animals. Initially, he tried to make friends with other porcupines at school. Nevertheless, things were not easy for Billy. Billy when he was young had a small accident and some of head spikes were broken. Thus, the head spikes were smaller compared to the rest on his body. His classmates often pushed away and made fun of him.

Billy was very sad because there is nothing he can do to change his appearance. He could however start looking for other friends outside the school. So, he started searching for friends in the neighborhood. Initially he tried to be friends with a little squirrel which lived in the tree. The squirrel however said “I cannot be friends with you. Your spikes can really hurt me bad”.

Then, Billy tried to be friends with a fox, but she said “Your spikes are very uncomfortable and they bother my soft skin and fur”.

Billy tried other animals as well, but all of them were very critical of Billy’s spikes and avoided him. Despite of continuous rejections, Billy did not give up. Instead he decided to go visit other places of the forest away from his neighborhood, because he truly wanted to find a friend who will accept him as he is with his spikes and his handicaps.

After many attempts to make friends with different animals and after many rejections, he sat and wanted to rest a bit before he continued this quest to find this special friend. Disappointed as he was he murmured “It’s so difficult for others to accept you as you are! I would love to find a friend he would care less that I have big spikes or some even broken spikes”. Suddenly a voice was heard and said: “I can be your friend! You sharp spikes do not bother me at all! I wear an armoire of my own!”

Billy got scared because he could not see any other animal around and he could not place from where the voice was coming from. The only thing he could see was a small round ball. Billy asked scared: “Who’s talking?” “Where are you? Why are you hiding?” Then, suddenly the brown ball started to pop up and open and a head with four legs appeared out of nowhere! Then the armantillo said: “My name is Paco” because whenever I want, I can become piccolino, a very small ball”. Billy was delighted and shouted with joy: “Finally I did it. I made my very first friend who accepts me as I am! Cheers!” From that time on, the small **hedgehog** and the armadillo become friends and they were inseparable playing all day long and roaming in the forest. Their company grew bigger, as other animals joined in their happy games and they did not truly cared how they look but how much fun they can have all together!



3. First, help the children to process and reflect on the story of persistence by asking them:

- (What do you think about the story?)
- What happened to Billy the little hedgehog?
- Why the other animals rejected Billy?
- How did the hedgehog feel when other animals didn't want him/reject him?
- What did Billy do when the other hedgehogs didn't want him?
- What was Billy's complain?
- What was the MAGIC characteristic that helped Billy to finally find a friend?
- Which are Billy's feelings and thoughts at the end of the story?
- (What do you think of the end of the story?)

4. Next, relate the story to the children's own experiences (Suggested questions):

- Can you think one time that somebody didn't want you or you have felt rejected by somebody?
- How did you feel?
- How did you react?
- Did you talk to somebody about that situation?
- Did you do anything to change that situation?
- How did you feel after you have acted upon your rejection experience?

5. Then discuss (if it was not mentioned earlier) about the feeling of anger, frustration, sadness or sense of injustice and sense of helplessness that rejection may cause to someone. Stress the fact that all these emotions are unpleasant but it is absolutely normal and understandable to experience them due to the rejection situation.

6. Then we want to lead the discussion to the conclusion that if something like that happens to us there is something that we can do. At this point, we want to get the children excited by saying them that we met Billy and he shares with us his secret (we use a puppet for make the scene more interesting). We create an atmosphere of suspense and then with rhythm we share Billy's secret. We repeat the following many times all together:

*If one day something like that happens to us  
A solutions we need to find right away!  
And if we don't find a solution immediately,  
We insist on and we try again.*

7. We give children play dough (or soft clay) and small pieces of straws cut in different lengths. We help children to make the hero of the story, Billy (body and head with clay and spikes with pieces of straws). We ask children to take their hedgehog at home and we ask them to narrate the story of Billy (as much as they remember) to their parents. We remind them the secret of Billy and we rehearse it in order to remember it and tell it to the parents.

### ***Take Home Activity***

Children are encouraged to ask their parents if they have ever been rejected either as children or as adults. It's useful if parents share their personal experiences of rejection and talk about their feelings and their actions to deal with this situation.

## Activity 2: The hedgehog with broken spikes

### *Learning Goal*

Children will be able to utilize positive talking when faced with rejection activities.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Think and express some positive thoughts when faced with rejection by peers.

### *Age Group*

Early Years

### *Level*

Intermediate

### *Materials needed*

Hand puppet of hedgehog

### *Activity Steps*

#### **Steps 1-7: Same as Activity 1.**

8. We ask children to think some positive thoughts (or helping thoughts) that Billy may have made and these thoughts finally helped him to find a friend. We help children referring to some of them as follow: *“I will manage to find a friend”, “I will not give up”, “There must be a friend who will accept me as I am”, “There must be a friend who will understand my value”, “There are some persons who accept me and love me as I am, like my family”*.
9. Finally, we are saying to children that now we are going to empower out hero, Billy, by saying to him some of the positive thoughts we have thought before. So all hold their hedgehog and they address them the previous sentences in 2nd person (e.g. *“There must be a friend who will accept you as you are”*).

### *Take Home Activity*

Children are encouraged to ask their parents if they have ever been rejected either as children or as adults. It's useful if parents share their personal experiences of rejection and talk about their feelings and their actions to deal with this situation.

## Activity 3: Rejection in daily life and ways to deal with it

### *Learning Goal*

Children will be able to recognize instances of rejection in daily life, share their own experiences of rejection and reflect of some course of action to deal with the situation.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Think of some ideas about actions that children may take in order to deal with rejection.

### *Age Group*

Early Years

### *Level*

Advanced

### *Materials needed*

Hand puppet of hedghoc, photos of rejection scenarios

### *Activity Steps*

**Steps 1-4: Same as Activity 1.**

5. Split the children to small groups and distribute one photo to each group showing scenes of a child who get rejected.

1<sup>st</sup> photo: Children who play a game and a child who sitting aside not participating, showing his sadness (facial expression and body language).

2<sup>nd</sup> photo: A group of children holding a party invitation and another child who looks sad and doesn't hold such an invitation.

3<sup>rd</sup> photo: A group of children sitting all together having lunch and having a good time and another child (maybe from a different cultural/racial background-roma) is sitting in another table alone.

4<sup>th</sup> photo: A group of children who laugh at a child

6. Ask children to work collaboratively and answer the following questions for the scene of its photo:

- What is happening in the photo?
- How the rejected child felt?

- Why the rejected child felt like that?
- Why the children may reject this child?
- What the rejected child can do to feel better?
- Can you give some advice to the rejected child in order to do something when he/she is being rejected?

7. Then we ask each group to present to the class their work and generate discussion.

8. On a second round we ask groups to prepare the following questions and to present their work in front of the class:

- What advice children can you give to the rejected child in order to make him/her feel better and deal with his/her unpleasant emotions (e.g. anger, frustration, disappointment) that probably felt at the moment of rejection? (**Advice on Actions in the Here and Now-Present**)
- What ideas can you propose in terms of actions that may help the rejected child to reverse rejection to something positive (i.e. acceptance) in the future. (**Advice on Actions in the Future**)

### *Take Home Activity*

Children are encouraged to ask their parents if they have ever been rejected either as children or as adults. It's useful if parents personal share their experiences of rejection and talk about their feelings and their actions to deal with this situation.

## Activity 4: Rejection in daily life and ways to deal with

### *Learning Goal*

Children will be able to recognize instances of rejection in daily life, share their own experiences of rejection and think of some actions to deal with rejection.

*Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Think of some ideas about actions that children may take in order to deal with rejection.

### *Age Group*

Early Primary

### *Level*



Basic

*Materials needed*

Hand puppet of hedghoc, photos of rejection scenarios

*Activity Steps*

Same as Activity 3.

## Activity 5: Carol, the new girl in the block

*Learning Goal*

Children will be able to recognize incidents of rejection in daily life, share their own experiences of rejection, understand that everybody may be rejected in different ways and reflect on possible actions to deal with rejection.

*Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Think of some ideas in order to deal with rejection, such as talking to somebody and making an action plan.

*Age Group*

Early Primary

*Level*

Intermediate

*Materials needed*

Sheet of papers.

*Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read the story.

## **“The new classmate”**

Carol arrived happy in her new school, Rose Elementary. She liked to make new friends and the fact she will have a new teacher, made her excited. Carol was used in making changes due to her dad’s job, the whole family had to move often. The new teacher, Ms. Susan has been informed by Carol’s parents that she is a gifted child. When Ms Susan introduced Carol to the class she said: *“This is Carol, who is very special and she doesn’t like any other child I have met before. She plays violin, since the age of 4, she has participated in many concerts and has won many awards. Also she is an “A” student and has won many awards in Math and Essay Writing”*. The teacher continued with enthusiasm and she said that Carol is adorable girl and she proposes to give to that exceptional child a hand of applause. The children looked at Carol and they were speechless. It was obvious that Carol was good in all these things and more, but this does not necessarily mean that her classmates would like her.

During the breaks Carol was asking politely for children to play with them. The other children agreed, but it was obvious they did not enjoy Carol’s company at all. Sometimes they will not call her with her name, but instead jokingly refer to her as the “the exceptional girl”. One day during music class, when the teacher asked one question, all children said: *“Ask Carol, who has won awards. She knows. How do we know the answer?”* and afterwards the whole class laughed hard.

Carol was sad that all this is happening to her. She felt all this experience was unfair and cruel to her. Sometimes she did not want to go to school, but since Carol has learned to never quit and she always tried to overcome adversity or obstacles raised by others.

One day, she discussed the issue with her teacher and they came up with some ideas how to get the class to accept Carol. They finally decided on the following idea. They made up a game which was called “You are Special”. Carol prepared the whole thing and explained the game to the whole class.

According to the rules of the game, every child had to go outside the class for 3-4 minutes and meanwhile the rest of the class, would think as a group of things that the child was doing very well or was exceptionally good at. When the child returned back to class, Carol as the class representative, read a list of all the good things and exceptional qualities the child had according to his/her classmates. The children loved playing this game! At the end, the teacher

said that: “All children are special and exceptional in more than one way and they all have gifts, which sometimes they may not be aware of”.

The next day, things in class were very different for Carol. Almost all children were friendly to her and they enjoyed playing with her in the breaks. They stopped calling her “Exceptional girl” in a derogatory manner and they rarely made fun of her any more at school.

3. First, help the children to process the story by asking them:

- (Did you like the story? ) What did you think of the story?
- What happened when a new classmate came to the class?
- How the students react to the new classmate and why?
- How did they behave to Carol?
- Why did students reject Carol?
- How did Carol feel about this rejection?
- What Carol did when she was rejected?

Do you have some other ideas that teacher and Carol may have done to deal with Carol’s problem?

- What do you think about the game Carol and teacher thought and how this game helped children?
- How the students’ behaviour to Carol changed after the game?

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4. Then relate the story to the children’s own experiences:

- Can you remember times that you have felt rejected by somebody?
- How did you feel?
- How did you react?
- Did you talk to somebody about that situation?
- Did you do anything to change that situation?
- How did you feel afterwards?

5. Next, we split children to 4 groups and give each group a vignette/story/scenario dealing with the issue of rejection:

1st Vignette: John has difficulties in learning. His classmates laugh at him when he makes a mistake. When teacher announce the test results the classmates laugh at him.

2<sup>nd</sup> Vignette: Sofia is an overweight girl and nobody likes her. When she asks her classmates to be with them they make jokes about her weight and they say that is impossible to play with her because she cannot even move.

3<sup>rd</sup> Vignette: George rarely gets an invitation to a play-date or to a party. He knows that other children meet every Friday in one's child home for playing, but he never get an invitation. He often invites some of his classmates to his home to play together, but he usually gets a negative answer.

4<sup>th</sup> Vignette: Maria has lately come to school. Her country is very poor country from Asia and that's why her family decided to move here. During recess Maria attempts to join other children's games. However, most of the time she gets a negative answer to join. Some children call her names and some others say negative comments about her, so they never include her in any activity.

6. Next, we ask children to work as a group and answer to the following questions like:

- What happened to the child in the vignette?
- What are the feelings of the rejected child in the story?
- Why others reject the child of the story (what are some possible reasons)?
- What advice can you give to the rejected child in order to feel better?
- What the rejected child of the story can do to deal with rejection?
- What are some ideas that may help the rejected child to reverse the situation of rejection into situation of acceptance in the future?

7. Next, we ask children to present the story of their group and their work on the related questions in the class in a timely fashion.

### *Take Home Activity*

Children are encouraged to ask their parents if they have ever been rejected either as children or as adults. It's useful if parents share their personal experiences of rejection and talk about their feelings and their actions to deal with this situation.

## Activity 6: The Sunflower of Acceptance

### *Learning Goal*

Children will be able to reframe an experience of rejection into a different (positive) perspective and take distance from it, so they can deal with it more efficiently.

*Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Handle rejection by thinking of other times, places and people that they have experienced acceptance and thus positive emotions.

### *Age Group*

Early Primary

### *Level*

Advanced

### *Materials needed*

Sheets of paper. activity sheet from the resource pack

### *Activity Steps*

**Steps 1-7: Same as Activity 5.**

8. Next, we introduce to the children the concept of acceptance by others and emotions felt when accepted. We stress the point that sometimes when feeling rejected a useful strategy is to remember the times when they felt accepted. We also stress that life has both rejections and acceptances for all children and that's to be expected.

9. Next, we ask children to focus on instances where possibly each child in the vignette and or in their lives may have experienced **acceptance** (opposite of rejection) in other situations (e.g. music teacher, parents, friends in the neighbourhood).

10. "The Flower of Acceptance". We give each child an activity sheet from the resource pack with a big flower on it. We ask them to write on heart of the flower their name and on each petal a person who accept them. We encourage children to decorate the flower and to keep it in a safe place in order to have a look each time they feel rejected by somebody.

### *Take Home Activity*

Children are encouraged to ask their parents if they have ever been rejected either as children or as adults. It's useful if parents share their personal experiences of rejection and talk about their feelings and their actions to deal with this situation. Then parents can share with children experiences that they have felt when accepted by others and how these feelings of acceptance may help them to compensate for unpleasant emotions of rejection.

## **Activity 7: Sunflower of Acceptance**

### *Learning Goal*

Children will be able to reframe an experience of rejection into a different (positive) perspective and take distance from it, so they can deal with it more efficiently.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Handle rejection by thinking of other times, places and people that they have experienced acceptance and thus positive emotions.

### *Age Group*

Late Primary

### *Level*

Basic

### *Materials needed*

Sheet of papers.

### *Activity Steps*

**Same as Activity 6**

## **Activity 8: Famous people who faced rejection!**

### *Learning Goal*

Children will be able to be inspired by other famous people who despite their rejection they eventually endured and overcome adversity (rejection).

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Understand that “*believe in myself*”, “*believe in my worth*”, “*courage*” and “*persistence*” are the key components, when somebody wants to turn the rejection (negative experience) into a growth experience.

### *Age Group*

Late Primary

## Level

Intermediate

## Materials needed

Photos of 4-5 well known people who got rejected in their life but overcame this negative experience: Walt Disney, Beatles, Writer of Harry Potter, J. K. Rowling, Michael Jordan, Albert Einstein.

## Activity Steps

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Split children into 4-5 groups and distribute them a sheet of paper with information about a famous person who got rejected, but finally he/she succeeded in life and some relative photos (of the person, or of the famous book of Harry Potter, of Mickey Mouse, etc.).

1<sup>ST</sup> group: **Walt Disney**. The man who gave us Disney World and Mickey Mouse. His first animation company went bankrupt. He was fired by a news editor because he lacked imagination. Legend has it he was turned down 302 times before he got financing for creating Disney World.

2<sup>nd</sup> group: **The Beatles**: They were rejected by many record labels. In a famous rejection, the label said, “*guitar groups are on the way out*” and “*the Beatles have no future in show business*”. After that the Beatles signed with EMI, brought Beatlemania to the United States, and became the greatest band in history.

3<sup>rd</sup> group: **J.K Rowling, the author of Harry Potter**. Penniless, recently divorced, and raising a child on her own, she wrote the first Harry Potter book on an old manual typewriter. Twelve publishers rejected the manuscript! A year later she was given the green light by Barry Cunningham from Bloomsbury, who agreed to publish the book but insisted she get a day job because there was no money in children’s books. The author finally did become richer than the Queen of England overnight.

4<sup>th</sup> group: **Michael Jordan**. He’s famous for being cut from his high school basketball team. He turned out to be the greatest basketball player but never let failure deter him. He has said “I have missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I have lost almost 300 games. On 26 occasions I have been entrusted to take the game winning shot, and I missed. I have failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed”

5<sup>th</sup> group: **Steve Jobs**: Steve Jobs a genius and inspiration icon in computers business was fired from his job by the executive board of the company (Apple), he had established long time ago. He came back and regained control of the company and went on to create successful products such as the iPhone and iPad.

3. Next, ask each group to read the above information, have a small discussion with the member of the group. Next, ask the group to prepare a mini presentation about the famous person assigned to them in front of the class.
4. Each group presents to the class the famous person by emphasizing the experience of rejection the person experience his/her final success.
5. After each presentation ask children to discuss the emotions and thoughts of the famous people after rejection occurred to them. Also we encourage children to think what made these persons to insist on and to try and try again. Also we ask children to think what may give somebody the power to go on trying even though he/she had failed. Distribute each group the related Hand-outs.
6. Then ask children to share with the class their own story of rejection and ask questions about the feelings that rejection generated in them. Also, we can ask children to think what may help them, so they can go on trying. Sharing stories of resilience helps children significantly.

### *Take Home Activity*

Ask children to look for stories in books, fairy tales or even internet sources of people who experienced rejection and finally they manage to succeed. They could be people from the family or outside of it or other well known people.

## **Activity 9: Famous people who turned rejection into gold!**

### *Learning Goal*

Children will be able to see rejection as a challenge and eventually turn the rejection into a a growth experience.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Utilize positive self-talk to experience positive emotions and learn not to give up (“believe in myself”, “believe in my worth”, “have courage” and “show persistence”).

### *Age Group*

Late Primary

### *Level*

Advanced

### *Materials needed*



Photos of four five well known people who got rejected in their life but overcame this negative experience: Walt Disney, Beatles, Writer of Harry Potter, Michel Jordan, Einstein.

### *Activity Steps*

**Steps 1-4: Same as Activity 8.**

5. Ask children to write down some of the possible thoughts that these famous people made when they experiencing rejection. (Distribute related Hand-out). What are the possible words that they said to themselves in order to help them not to give up.
6. Ask one child of the group to play the role of the famous-rejected person and to verbalize the internal dialogue after rejection.
7. Ask children to think what made these persons persist and not give up.
8. Finally ask children to think what may give somebody the power to persist even though he/she had failed. How and who can help us to: “*believe in ourselves*”, “*believe in our worth*” and how and who can give us courage and power to persist in the face of rejection or failure.

### *Take Home Activity*

Ask children to look up stories on their own of people who experienced rejection and finally they managed to succeed. They could be people from the family or outside of it or even well known people.

## Set 2: Dealing with Rejections by Teachers

### Learning Goals

By the end of this unit, children will be able to:

#### **Early Years (3-5 years)**

- Understand that sometimes teachers’ behavior may be or is experienced by children as rejection and this situation occurs sometimes to a lesser or larger degree to most of the children and it is normal to experience unpleasant feelings.

- Understand that sometimes teachers' behavior may be or is experienced by children as rejection, but there is something that they can do to deal with it.
- Understand that there is something that they can do to deal with teachers' behavior (rejection) like interpreting of teacher's behaviors from a different perspective.

### **Early Primary (6-8 years)**

- Understand that there is something that they can do to deal with teachers' behavior (rejection) like interpreting teacher's behavior from a different perspective.
- Understand that teacher rejection may happen in daily school life and most of the times is not related with the children's value and reflect on actions to be taken to deal with teacher rejection or words of prejudice, racism or derogatory nature.
- Understand that teacher's behavior (rejection) most of the times is not related with the children's value and think of resources of courage to deal with rejection (e.g. family and friends).

### **Late Primary (9-11)**

- Understand that teacher's behavior (rejection) most of the times is not related with the children's value and think of resources of courage to deal with rejection (e.g. family and friends).
- Share their own experiences of rejection by teachers and find compensating techniques to deal with rejection.
- Share their own experiences of rejection by teachers and propose compensating techniques to their classmates in order to help them to deal with rejection.

## **Activity 1: Louisa doesn't want to go school**

### ***Learning Goal***

Children will be able to understand that sometimes teachers' behavior may be or is experienced by children as rejection and this situation happens often to a lesser or larger degree to almost all children and it is normal to cause unpleasant feelings.

*Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Talk about unpleasant feelings that rejection cause and find ways of overcoming negative emotions.

### *Age Group*

Early Years

### *Level*

Basic

### *Materials needed*

Hand puppet of squirrel.

### *Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read this story to the children using hand or finger puppets (squirrel)

#### **“Louisa’s teacher doesn’t love her”**

Louisa the squirrel, started kindergarden and was very happy for her new beginning. She made new friends, she liked learning new things and for the first two weeks she was really happy for going to school. But after these two weeks, she was not willing to go at school at all. She started complaining for headaches and belly pain. Her mother ask her what was happening and why she doesn't like school any more. Then Louisa said: “Mammy, my teacher hates me!” Mother was very surprised with what Louisa said and she politely asked her: “Could you please, my Louisa, explain to me how did you understand that?”. Then Louisa started to explain: “Well, my teacher rarely asks me to be her second hand (helper) as she used to do it and she never tastes the cookies I offered her”. And Louisa continued: “Also, she never kisses me and she never asks me to seat next to her”. At this point Louisa started to cry. Her mother hugged her and then Louisa continued: “And now mammy I will tell you the worst of all. One day I made a beautiful drawing especially for her and I gave it to my teacher. My teacher said thank you but she didn't show any enthusiasm and after a while I saw my drawing to the trash-can! Now you understand why I feel that my teacher hates me!” Louisa said and she started cry again.

3. First, help the children to process and reflect on the story by asking them:

- (What do you think of the story? )
- How Louisa felt at school the first two weeks?
- How Louisa felt after two weeks?
- What made Louisa's feelings to change?
- What do you think of teacher's behaviour?
- Do you think teacher hates Louisa?
- What do you think Louisa's mother said to her?

4. Next, relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- Can you remember times that you have felt like Louisa?
- How did you feel?
- How did you react?
- Did you talk to somebody about this situation?
- Did you do anything to change this situation?
- How did you feel then?

5. Use a hand puppet of a squirrel and then ask pupils to think ways of helping Louisa to feel better and give her an advice on how to change this unpleasant situation she experiences. Ask children to talk directly to the puppet and the puppet will make a dialogue with children by asking more information for feeling better of the squirrel and also squirrel will thank children for their important advices.

6. Next, ask pupils to draw Louisa doing things that make her happy at school.

### *Take Home Activity*

Children are encouraged to ask their parents if they have ever been rejected by teachers. It's useful if parents share their personal experiences of rejection and talk about their feelings and their actions to deal with this situation. Then parents can share with children experiences that they had when felt accepted by others and how this feeling of acceptance may help them to compensate with the feeling of rejection.

## **Activity 2: Louisa doesn't want to go school**

### *Learning Goal*

Children will be able to understand that sometimes teachers' behavior may be or is experienced by children as rejection, but there is something that they can do to deal with it.

*Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Talk about unpleasant feelings that rejection may cause and think of an action plan that the hero of the story can try in order to deal with rejection at school.

### *Age Group*

Early Years

### *Level*

Intermediate

### *Materials needed*

Hand puppet of squirrel.

### *Activity Steps*

**Steps 1-4: Same as Activity 1.**

### **5. Role Play (Mini theatrical play)**

Ask pupils to think of advices that may give to Louisa in order to help her deal with the unpleasant situation she experiencing. After brainstorming with the students, ask them for volunteers to role play. One child at a time will play role of Louisa in the situation and she will be thinking aloud of an action plan to handle the situation. For example *“I will talk to the teacher about my feelings”, “I will talk to the teacher about the situations make me feel sad”, “I will ask my teacher to seat next to her and not waiting for her to do this”, “I will try to offer to my teacher something more healthy than cookies” “I will make a nice drawing and I will offer it to my best friend at school, instead of the teacher”*.

### *Take Home Activity*

Children are encouraged to ask their parents if they have ever been rejected by teachers. It's useful if parents share their personal experiences of rejection and talk about their feelings and their actions to deal with this situation. Then parents can share with children experiences that they had when felt accepted by others and how this feeling of acceptance may help them to compensate with the feeling of rejection

## **Activity 3: Louisa doesn't want to go school**

### *Learning Goal*

Children will be able to understand that there is something that they can do to deal with teachers' behavior (rejection) like thinking of teacher's behaviors from a different perspective.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Think rejection in an alternative way to understand teachers' behavior from an alternative explanation.

### *Age Group*

Early Years

### *Level*

Advanced

### *Materials needed*

Hand puppet of squirrel.

### *Activity Steps*

#### **Steps 1-4: Same as Activity 2.**

5. Split pupils into 5 groups and give them (either in oral or in written form) one of the teacher's behaviors, that make Luisa feel sad and obviously rejected:

- *"My teacher rarely asks me to be her second hand (helper) as she used to do it."*
- *"My teacher never tastes the cookies I offered her."*
- *"My teacher never kisses me."*
- *"My teacher never asks me to seat next to her."*
- *"My teacher didn't show any enthusiasm to my drawing and after a while I saw my drawing to the trash-can."*

6. Next, ask the student to think for each situation other explanations why teacher may behave like that. Explain children that there are two ways of thinking: positive and negative way. In any case we can apply both ways of thinking. Then give children some examples how they can challenge each statement and give them alternative and positive explanations. For example, "my teacher rarely takes from the cookies Luisa offers her", not because she doesn't like me but because she is not eating sweeties for health reasons (she is on a diet) or "my teacher never asks

me to seat next to her” not because she doesn’t like me, but because my teacher usually ask children who create troubles to be next to her in order to help them to be calm.

Then ask groups to share their ideas in classroom.

### *Take Home Activity*

Children are encouraged to ask their parents if they have ever been rejected by teachers. It’s useful if parents share their personal experiences of rejection and talk about their feelings and their actions to deal with this situation. Then parents can share with their children experiences they had when felt accepted by others and how this feeling of acceptance may help them to compensate with the feeling of rejection

## Activity 4: Louisa doesn’t want to go school

### *Learning Goal*

Children will be able to understand that there is something that they can do to deal with teachers’ behavior (rejection) such as thinking of teacher’s behaviors from a different perspective.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Think of rejection from an alternative way (see teachers’ behaviors from another perspective) and make an action plan.

### *Age Group*

Early Primary

### *Level*

Basic

### *Materials needed*

Hand puppet of squirrel.

### *Activity Steps*

**Same as Activity 3**

## Activity 5: After the rain the rainbow comes

### *Learning Goal*

Children will be able to understand that teacher rejection may happen in daily school life and most of the times is not related with the children's value and reflect on actions to be taken to deal with teacher rejection or words of prejudice, racism or derogatory nature.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Recognise cases of rejection in school environment and share their own experiences of rejection by teachers.

### *Age Group*

Early Primary

### *Level*

Intermediate

### *Materials needed*

4-5 big sheets of paper.

### *Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. We talk to the children about some instances that teachers may behave in a way that is perceived or is rejection by a student. Then we can say that this situation of rejection is not a pleasant one but hopefully there are things that we can think and do to handle this challenge. So, today we are going to discuss how we are going to deal with this unpleasant situation.
3. Get children's attention by saying that today you are going to discuss about the a Jasmine's story who is a child from another land.
4. Read or tell this story to the children.

#### **"After the rain, the rainbow comes"**

Jasmine is a 9 year girl who came with her parents from a country where there was war and they need to relocate. She has darker skin and started school this year in Lilly Elementary school. Jasmine is a happy child who loves to laugh and play in sand, but sometimes does not speak very well and the other children do not understand her. Her parents and her brothers understand the english language, but they mostly speak a different language at home. So Jasmine has difficult time speaking English very well. Jasmine has only 5 months in this country and



things have not been easy. In the classroom, Ms Xanthaki often would not be patient and give enough time to Jasmine to respond or read and quickly move to someone else. One time, Jasmine tried to read out loud and the teacher made fun of her in front of the class for not pronouncing the words well.

When the teacher asks a question to Jasmine, Jasmine sometimes doesn't understand the question and she asks teacher for repeating it. Ms Xanthaki, the teacher sometimes be in hurry and she prefers to ask another child instead of repeating the question to Jasmin. Also, when Jasmin speaks she is making mistakes and is not always be understandable. Ms Xanthaki sometimes is not so very polite to Jasmine and she angrily says: "Jasmin I cannot understand what are you saying. You need to speak English. In this class we only speak English". Jasmine feels sad and her teachers words are hurting her. Jasmine tries hard and studies at home, but her parents do not know the language and they cannot help her. She knows she will learn the language and all she needs is a little more time, but Ms Xanthaki seems she doesn't want to give her some opportunities and some time to do this. Jasmine feels rejected by teacher and she sometimes cries. Her parents said to her only one thing "My child, after the rain, the rainbow comes. Remember this. Now is the rain". The other day the class was planning to go on a excursion in a nearby lake and Ms Xanthaki said to Jasmine: "I think your not coming to the trip because this trip is probably too expensive for you?" Jasmine felt hurt and oftentimes she feels she does not belong in this class. Children sometimes are friendly and sometimes are distant themselves. Jasmine had in her pocket a small bracelet with a rainbow. She often looked at it and often remember her parents words in school.

5. First, help the children to process the story and reflect by asking them:

- What do you think of Jasmine's story?
- How Jasmine felt when her teacher said to her all these hurtful words of rejection?
- Do you think Jasmine was affected by her teacher's words?
- Why teacher behaved like that towards Jasmine?
- What may help Jasmine to believe in herself and not being affected by teacher's words?

6. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- Can you remember times that you have heard a teacher saying to you harsh words like Ms. Xenaki have done to Jasmine?
- How did you feel?
- How did you react?
- Do you thing that the teacher's words can affect you?
- Did you talk to somebody about that situation?
- Did you do anything to change that situation?
- How did you feel then?

7. Next, split pupils into small groups and give them a big sheet of paper. Next, ask them to seat comfortable (either to big tables or on the floor) and each pupil can share with his/her group his/her personal story of teacher rejection (or harsh words) or stories of their classmates and then he/she can write it down on the paper. Encourage pupils to remember how they felt when they experienced rejection and if they did something to deal with it.

8. Each group will present in the classroom the personal stories written in paper without revealing which story belongs to whom.

### *Take Home Activity*

Children are encouraged to ask their parents if they have ever been rejected by teachers. It's useful if parents share their personal experiences of rejection and talk about their feelings and their actions to deal with this situation. Then parents can share with children experiences that they had when felt accepted by others and how this feeling of acceptance may help them to compensate with the feeling of rejection

## **Activity 6: Courage is what I need most**

### *Learning Goal*

Children will be able to understand that teacher's behavior (rejection) most of the times is not related with the children's value and think of resources of courage to deal with rejection (e.g. family and friends).

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Understand that positive self-talk and encouraging sentences from family and friends can be a compensating strategy for dealing with rejection by teachers.

### *Age Group*

Early Primary

### *Level*

Advanced

### *Materials needed*

4-5 big sheets of paper.

### *Activity Steps*

#### **Steps 1-6: Same as Activity 5.**

7. Split pupils into three groups and give them a big sheet of paper. Then ask the first group to think as they were Jasmine, the second group like they are Jasmine's family and the third group like they are Jasmine's friends. Then ask the first group to think some encouraging sentences that Jasmine may have said to himself in order to do positive thinking by focusing on his strengths. For example: *"I know that I can do many things in my life"*, *"I know that I am better than my teacher thinks and I will prove it"*. Then ask the other two groups (family and friends) to think what could have said to Jasmine in order to encourage her not to be disappointed by teacher's negative words.

8. Each group will present its work into the classroom and discussion will take place with teacher's initiative.

### *Take Home Activity*

Children are encouraged to ask their parents if they have ever been rejected by teachers. It's useful if parents share their personal experiences of rejection and talk about their feelings and their actions to deal with this situation. Then parents can share with children experiences that they had when felt accepted by others and how this feeling of acceptance may help them to compensate with the feeling of rejection

## **Activity 7: Courage is what I need most**

### *Learning Goal*

Children will be able to understand that teacher's behavior (rejection) most of the times is not related with the children's value and think of resources of courage to deal with rejection (e.g. family and friends).

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Understand that positive self-talk and encouraging words from others (e.g. family and friends) can be a compensating strategy for dealing with rejection by teachers.

### *Age Group*

Late Primary

### *Level*

Basic

### *Materials needed*

4-5 big sheets of paper.

### *Activity Steps*

**Same as Activity 6.**

## Activity 8: Rejection is a great challenge for ALL!

### *Learning Goal*

Children will be able to share their own experiences of rejection by teachers and find compensating techniques to deal with rejection.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Focus on positive experiences in school life.

### *Age Group*

Late Primary

### *Level*

Intermediate

### *Materials needed*

Sheets of paper for every student.

### *Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. We talk to the children about some instances that teachers may behave in a way that is or can be perceived as rejection by the student. Then we can say that this situation of rejection is not a pleasant one but hopefully there are things that we can think and do to handle this challenge. So, today we are going to discuss how we are going to deal with this unpleasant situation.
3. Read or tell this story to the children.

Einstein was one of the most intelligent persons in the world and is the most famous scientist of all the times. He won the Nobel Prize, the biggest prize of the world, in 1905 for his work on Physics. He had made a lot of achievements and one of them is that he explained why the sky is blue, a question that no other scientist could have explained until then. Such intelligence and curiosity did not, however, translate into great success in school. The young Einstein hated the rigid structure and boring memorization that characterized education in late nineteenth-century Germany, receiving mediocre grades and often getting into trouble for rebelling against his teachers' authority. Teachers were very upset with him and many times rejected him. His seventh-grade teacher, exasperated by young Albert's insubordination, famously told Einstein he "would never get anywhere in life."

4. Help the children to process and reflect the story by asking them:

- What do you think of Einstein's story?
- How Einstein felt when his teacher said to him that he would never get anywhere in life?
- Do you think Einstein was affected by teacher's words?
- Why teacher behaved like that towards Einstein?
- How Einstein may felt about himself during school life?
- What may help Einstein to believe in himself and not being affected by teacher's words?
- Who may have helped Einstein to believe in himself?

5. Give to each student a sheet of paper divided into 2 columns. Ask each pupil to write in the first column a personal story of teacher rejection he/she may have experienced. In the second column, ask pupils to write as many instances of rewards they may have received from teachers in any school activity.

6. Then discuss about students' experience on doing this exercise and ask them how challenging it was for them to focus on positive experiences.

7. Ask them to share their experiences with the whole class.

8. Finally, help students to understand that rejection may be a small part of their school life and by doing this kind of exercise they can help themselves focusing on good experiences and this way may be more effective to handle rejection in the future.

### *Take Home Activity*

Children are encouraged to ask their parents if they have ever been rejected by teachers. It's useful if parents share their personal experiences of rejection and talk about their feelings and their actions to deal with this situation. Then parents can share with children experiences that they had when felt accepted by others and how this feeling of acceptance may help them to compensate with the feeling of rejection

## Activity 9: A power Action plan for Rejection

### *Learning Goal*

Children will be able to share their own experiences of rejection by teachers and propose compensating techniques to their classmates in order to help them to deal with rejection.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Make an action plan for dealing with rejection.

### *Age Group*

Late Primary

### *Level*

Advanced

### *Materials needed*

Sheets of paper of each student.

### *Activity Steps*

1. We discuss with the children about some instances that teachers may behave in a way that is rejecting towards the student. Then we can stress the point that this situation of rejection is not a pleasant one, but hopefully there are things that we can think and do to handle this challenge. So, today we are going to discuss how we are going to deal with this unpleasant situation.

2. Read or tell this story to the children.

Einstein was one of the most intelligent persons in the world and is the most famous scientist of all the times. He won the Nobel Prize, the biggest prize of the world, in 1905 for his work on Physics. He had made a lot of achievements and one of them is that he explained why the sky is blue, a question that no other scientist could have explained until then. Such intelligence and curiosity did not, however, translate into great success in school. The young Einstein hated the rigid structure and boring memorization that characterized education in late nineteenth-century Germany, receiving mediocre grades and often getting into trouble for rebelling against his teachers' authority. Teachers were very upset with him and many times rejected him. His seventh-grade teacher, exasperated by young Albert's insubordination, famously told Einstein he "would never get anywhere in life."

3. First, help the children to process and reflect the story by asking them:

- What do you think of Einstein's story?
- How Einstein felt when his teacher said to him that he would never get anywhere in life?
- Do you think Einstein was affected by teacher's words?
- Why teacher behaved like that towards Einstein?
- How Einstein may felt about himself during school life?
- What may help Einstein to believe in himself and not being affected by teacher's words?
- Who may have helped Einstein to believe in himself?

4. Give to each student a sheet of paper and ask them to write anonymous his/her personal story of rejection by a teacher.

5. Next, put all pieces of paper into a box and ask each student to take one paper by chance without knowing to whom the story belongs.

6. Ask each student to work on his own and to write down an action plan for the person whose rejection story belong in order to deal with rejection. If students find difficult to make an action plan, ask them to write at least three pieces of advice (things the rejected person can do or think) in order to deal effectively with rejection). You may need to give motivation to students that the best action is going to win an award Best Advice to Face Rejection Award!

7. Put again sheets of paper into a box and ask each student to take one paper by chance and read the rejection story and the suggested ideas which are written on.

## **Set 3: Dealing with Rejection by family members and managing unpleasant emotions**

### **Learning Goals**

**By the end of this unit, children will be able to:**

### **Early Years (3-5 years)**

- Understand that sometimes parental behavior may be or is experienced by children as rejection and this situation occurs often to a lesser or to larger degree to most of the students, and it is normal to cause unpleasant feelings.
- Understand that sometimes parental behavior may be or is experienced by children as rejection, but there is a course of action to be taken to deal with it.
- Understand that there is some course of action that to be taken to deal with parental behavior (rejection) such as conceptualizing parental behaviors from a different perspective.

### **Early Primary (6-8 years)**

- Understand that there is something that they can do to deal with parents' behavior (rejection) like thinking of parents' behaviors from a different perspective.
- Understand that sometimes siblings' behavior may be or is experienced by children as rejection, but there is something that they can do to deal with siblings' behavior (rejection) like thinking siblings' behavior from a different perspective.
- Understand that there some sort of action to be taken in order to deal with siblings' behavior (rejection) like asking for help, seeing situation from a different perspective, thinking positively and making an action plan.

### **Late Primary (9-11)**

- Understand that there is something that they can do to deal with siblings' behavior (rejection) like asking for help, seeing situation from a different perspective, thinking positively and making an action plan.
- Understand that there is something that they can do to deal with parents' behavior (rejection) like seeing situation from a different perspective, thinking positively and making an action plan.
- Show more understanding towards the parents' behaviours and give alternative explanations to them and also learn not to take parents' behaviours personally.



## Activity 1: A newborn comes to Tom's family

### *Learning Goal*

Children will be able to help understand that sometimes parents' behavior may be or is experienced by children as rejection and this situation can be happened sometimes to lesser or larger degree and is normal to cause unpleasant feelings.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Recognize and talk about the unpleasant feelings that rejection may cause.

### *Age Group*

Early Years

### *Level*

Basic

### *Materials needed*

Hand puppet of hedgehog.

### *Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read the story to the children.



Tom is a small **squirrel** who was usually very happy. He used to spent lots of time with his mother all day doing many things together. He was helping her to cook and to clean the house. They were going every day to the play ground and they had a lot of fun together. In the afternoons Tom was playing with his father and he was happy. One day his parents announced him that a new member will come in their family. From the day that Tom' brother came home Tom's life changed totally. His parents announced Tom that it's time for him to start school. Tom was going every day to school and his mother stayed home and take care his little brother. When Tom was coming back from school his mother would kiss him and encourage him to watch children's' programs on T.V. in order to feed the baby. After lunch Tom's mother put Tom and his brother to bed, because she was very tired and she needed to get some rest. As soon as Tom's father came back from work, his mother asked him to take care of the baby because she needed to go for shopping. So his father could not play with Tom since he was holding the baby. Moreover, in the afternoon, Tom tried to play with his brother, but sometimes he would do inappropriate things for babies and his parents would punish him often. Tom felt that his life has become awful. He feels that his parents never have time for doing things with him and that makes him feel very sad. Also Tom feels that his parents do not love him anymore, because now they have a new cute baby who never makes them angry. Moreover, he feels that he is not as important and lovable as his little brother, Chicito.



3. First, help the children to process and reflect on the story by asking them:

- How was Tom's daily life before Chicito's arrival?
- How was Tom's daily life after his brother arrival?
- What are Tom's feelings about this change?
- Why did he feel like that?
- What Tom thought about his parents?
- What Tom could have done in order to change this unpleasant situation?

4. Next, relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- Can you remember one time that you have felt ignored or neglected or rejected by somebody in your family?
- How did you feel?
- Did you talk to somebody about that situation?
- Did you do anything to change that situation?
- How did you feel after you have done?

5. Next, discuss about the feeling of anger, frustration, sadness or helplessness, sense of injustice that rejection may cause to everybody and stressing the fact that all these emotions are normal and understandable due to the unpleasant situation. The conclusion is that we can learn to think in a positive way (RESILIENT THINKING) and come up with creative actions (RESILIENT ACTIONS) to find solutions to problems live brings our way.

6. Then ask pupils to draw Tom doing things that make him happy at home.

### *Take Home Activity*

Children are encouraged to ask their parents if they have ever been rejected either as children or as adults. It's useful if parents personal experiences of rejection and talk about their feelings and their actions to deal with this situation.

## Activity 2: The squirrel that nobody spent time with

### *Learning Goal*

Children will be able to understand that sometimes parental behavior may be or is experienced by children as rejection, but there are actions to be taken to deal with this situation.

*Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Think ways of experiencing positive emotions despite rejection.

### *Age Group*

Early Years

### *Level*

Intermediate

### *Materials needed*

Hand puppet of squirrel.

### *Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Start the lesson by making a small introduction to the subject of rejection.

We talk to the children about some instances that children may feel rejected by others. We may refer to situations such as when parents don't satisfy children's desires, when parents don't have enough time for their children, when parents punish their children or yielding at them, when parents give more attention to siblings. Then we explain that sometimes children may feel rejected by family members and that may be happen to us as well. We can continue by saying: "This situation of rejection is not a pleasant one but hopefully there are things that we can think and do to handle this challenge. So, today we are going to discuss together how we are going to deal with this unpleasant situation". Next, we introduce the hero of our story, Cooper, a small squirrel.

1. Read the story to the children.

### **"Cooper feels lonely"**

Once upon a time there was a squirrel named Cooper, who lived with his family in forest. He has an older brother, Jake who was going to the squirrel school. Every day they were waking up, washing their teeth and Cooper's parents first were taking him to aunt Jinny for babysitting and then they were taking Jake to the school. All day long the parents looked for nuts in the forest, but Copper was thinking that they may spend time with his brother in the forest. In the afternoon, the mother squirrel was cooking and the dad was teaching Jake different tips around the forest. Cooper was playing by himself and felt very lonely and he wanted to join them (dad and Jake) but he usually was send off because he was too young for learning things for the forest. Next, he would go to the mother and ask her to help with the dinner preparations, but the mother refuses him, saying that the pot is hot and it's dangerous for him. Cooper felt sad and alone. He thought that his parents did not really love him, because they did not really have time to play

with him or doing other things together. One day Cooper was so sad, he did not want to eat and stay hungry all day long. That day, everybody in the family was asking him questions and were trying to find out what is the problem and taking care of him.

3. First, help the children to process and reflect on the story by asking them:

- How was Cooper's daily life?
- What was the Cooper's complain?
- What are Cooper's feelings?
- Why did he feel like that?
- What Cooper thought about his family?
- What are your feelings about Cooper?
- What Cooper did when he felt very sad?
- What happened when Cooper stopped eating?
- What else could Cooper has done in order to change the unpleasant situation?

4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- Can you remember one time that you have felt ignored or neglected or rejected by somebody in your family?
- How did you feel?
- Did you talk to somebody about that situation?
- Did you do anything to change that situation?
- How did you feel after you have done?

6. 5. Then discuss about the feelings of anger, frustration, sadness or helplessness, sense of injustice that rejection can cause to everybody. The teacher needs to stress the fact that all these emotions are normal and understandable due to this unpleasant situation. The conclusion is that we can learn to think in a positive way (RESILIENT THINKING) and come up with creative actions (RESILIENT ACTIONS) to find solutions to problems live brings our way.

6. Divide the children into groups of 4-5 children and encourage them to think possible actions that Copper could have taken in order to feel better and to change the situation. Then ask the children to share their ideas in the classroom.

### *Take Home Activity*

Children are encouraged to ask their parents if they have ever been rejected either as children or as adults. It's useful if parents personal experiences of rejection and talk about their feelings and their actions to deal with this situation.

### Activity 3: Cooper, the squirrel that nobody spent time with

#### *Learning Goal*

Children will be able to understand that sometimes parents' behavior may be or is experienced by children as rejection, but there is something that they can do to deal with parents' behavior (rejection) like thinking parents' behavior from a different perspective.

#### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Identify the differences between positive and negative way of thinking and exercise themselves to think in positive way.

#### *Age Group*

Early Years

#### *Level*

Advanced

#### *Materials needed*

Hand puppet of squirrel.

#### *Activity Steps*

##### **Steps 1-5: Same as Activity 3**

6. Divide the children into 3 groups and give each group one of the following statements. Then ask each group to think their statement in many different ways and write down the Cooper's thoughts to the bubbles (Hand-out). Explain to children that there are alternative ways of thinking about the same statement, one is a positive way and the other is a negative way. Then ask the children to share their ideas in the classroom. We give an example to the children. "My father does not have time to play with me" The negative way of thinking will be: "He does not love me enough". The positive way will be: "At this period of time he is busy, but this project he is working on will finish soon. He still loves me enough, though he cannot play right now with me".

The statements to be given to the groups:

- *“Copper’s parents take him to aunt Jinny for babysitting”.*
- *“Dad is teaching Jake (brother) different tips around the forest and when Cooper ask them to join then the father usually send off because he is too young for learning things for the forest”.*
- *“Copper’s mother refuses him to help her with the dinner preparations”*

8. Ask children to make one positive and one negative thought for each of the above statements. Then introduce them the idea that the way of thinking affect the way of feeling. So there is something that we can do to feel better and that is to think in a positive way, even if it is difficult at the beginning.

### *Take Home Activity*

Children are encouraged to ask their parents if they have ever been rejected either as children or as adults. It’s useful if parents personal experiences of rejection and talk about their feelings and their actions to deal with this situation.

## **Activity 4: : Cooper, the squirrel that nobody had time for**

### *Learning Goal*

Children will be able to understand that sometimes parents’ behavior may be or is experienced by children as rejection, but there is something that they can do to deal with parents’ behavior (rejection) like thinking parents’ behavior from a different perspective.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Identify the differences between positive and negative way of thinking and practice positive thinking.

### *Age Group*

Early Primary

### *Level*

Basic

**Same activity as Activity 3.**

## **Activity 5: My brother doesn’t like me**

### *Learning Goal*

Children will understand that sometimes siblings' behavior may be or is experienced by them as rejection, but there is some course of action they can take to deal with this negative behavior (rejection) such as thinking about this negative behavior from a different (positive) perspective.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Identify the differences between positive and negative way of thinking and practice to think in positive way. (positive tracking)

### *Age Group*

Early Primary

### *Level*

Intermediate

### *Materials needed*

Sheets of paper

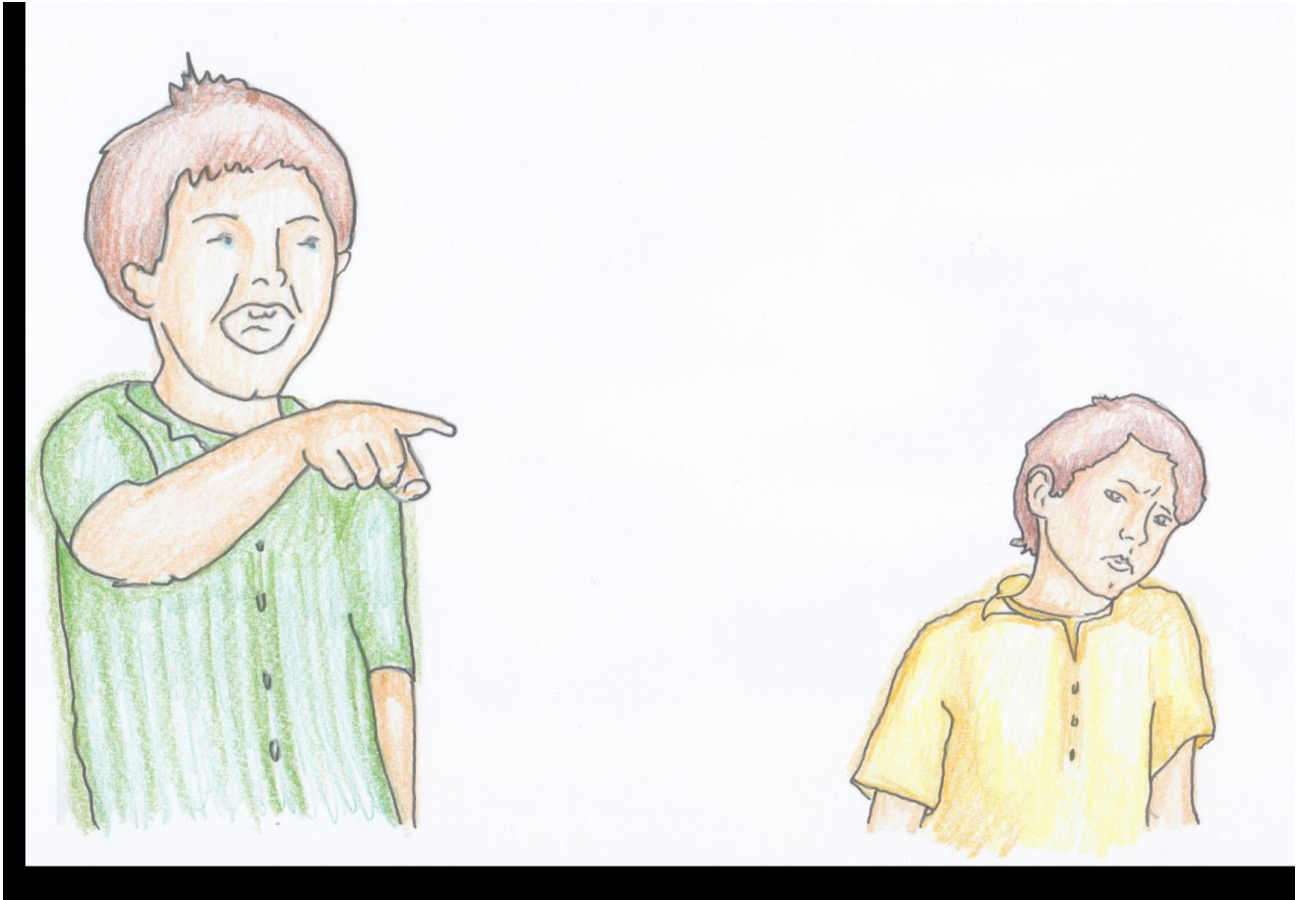
### *Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read the story to the children.

### **“Jimmy’s brother doesn’t want her”**

Jimmy is 7 years old and lives with his parents and older brother John, who is 10. Jimmy likes his brother very much and he really enjoys being with him. He finds him very clever, very funny and he admires him a lot. Every time Jimmy has free time he is asking politely his brother if he has some time to play with him, but the answer is always “no”. Sometimes Jimmy would beg John to play with him any game he prefers, but the answer is usually: “You are so young to play with you”. Every Friday, John invites his friends at home. The parents have told him that he can invite his friends with one condition, that they will involve Jimmy in their games as well. Unfortunately, John never kept his promise and he was yelling at Jimmy every time he was entering his room. Some Sundays Jimmy’s parents propose to kids to go for lunch at a restaurant, but his brother always says “I don’t want to come, I don’t have fun being with this baby, I prefer to be by myself”.





1. First, help the children to process and reflect on the story by asking them:

- How Jimmy feels when his brother never wants to play with him?
- How Jimmy feels when his brother yelling at him, asking him to leave his room?
- How Jimmy feels when his brother prefers to be by himself instead being with him?
- What may Jimmy think about himself?

4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- Can you remember one time that you have felt ignored or neglected or rejected by your brother or sister (or relative child)?
- How did you feel?
- Did you talk to somebody about that situation?
- Did you do anything to change that situation?
- How did you feel after you have done?

5. Divide the children into groups of 4-5 children and ask them to write down in a sheet of paper some of Helen's thoughts when she is being systematically rejected by her brother.

7. Then discuss about the feelings of anger, frustration, sadness or helplessness, sense of injustice that rejection and the relating negative thoughts Helen may experience or can cause to uncomfortable feelings to anyone. The teacher needs to stress the fact that all these emotions are normal and understandable due to the unpleasant situation. The conclusion is that we can learn to think in a positive way (RESILIENT THINKING) and come up with creative actions (RESILIENT ACTIONS) to find solutions to problems life brings our way.

7. Ask each group to fill the hand-out with some positive thoughts Helen may make instead of negative. Discuss to the class how the positive way of thinking may affect the way of feeling (emotions).

### *Take Home Activity*

Children are encouraged to ask their parents if they have ever been rejected either as children or as adults. It's useful if share personal experiences of rejection and talk about their feelings and their actions to deal with this situation.

## Activity 6: My sister is hurtful to me

### *Learning Goal*

Children will be able to understand that there is something that they can do to deal with siblings' behavior (rejection) like asking for help, seeing situation from a different perspective, thinking positively and making an action plan.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Process different ways of thinking and acting in order to deal with rejection siblings' rejection.

### *Age Group*

Early Primary

### *Level*

Advanced

### *Materials needed*

Manual, sheets of paper

### *Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson with a Mindfulness activity.
2. Read the story to the children.

#### **“My sister Lilla is hurtful to me”**



Jenny is 7 years old and live with her parents and her older sister Lila who is 8. Jenny likes her sister very much and she really enjoys being with her. Also both sisters have many things in common, they both like to play with dolls, playing “family”, reading books about fairy tales, going to the play ground etc. Every afternoon that two girls have free time, Jenny is asking politely her sister to play with her, but the answer is always “no, I will call my friend Jessica (a neighbor) to came and play together”. When Lila’s friend comes, Jenny asks them if she can join them, but the answer is always a big “no”. At school, Jenny is looking for her sister during breaks, but Lila never let her to join her company. Sometimes Helen begs Lila to play with her any game she prefers but the answer is again a big “no”. Every Friday Lila invites at home her best friends Jessica and Mary. Lila’s parents have told her that she can invite her friends with the condition that they will involve in their games Jenny as well. Unfortunately, Lila rarely keeps her promise and she usually yells at Jenny, calling her names, every time she was trying to play with her and her friends. Some Sundays Jenny’s parents propose to the children to go for lunch at a restaurant. Then Lila begs her parents to invite also another friendly family who has a girl who is Lila’s classmate. Jenny’s parents enjoy this family’ company so they invite them. Lila has a lot of fun with her classmate, but she never allows Jenny to join them. Jenny sometimes thinks she is living at the same house with an enemy.



3. First, help the children to process and reflect on the story by asking them:

- How Jenny feels when her sister doesn't want to play with her all the times?
- How Jenny feels when her sister yielding at her, asking her to leave his room?
- How Jenny feels when his sister always prefers to be with another girl except?
- What may Jenny think about herself?

4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- Can you remember one time that you have felt ignored or neglected or rejected by your brother or sister?
- How did you feel?
- Did you talk to somebody about that situation?
- Did you do anything to change that situation?
- How did you feel after you have done?

5. Divide the children into 4 groups and ask them to write down in a sheet of paper some of the thoughts Helen may have due to ther brother's continuous rejection.

7. Then give each group the following scenarios of Jenny's daily life. (The Hand-out will have two columns. One column will have statements and the other will have thoughts).

- i. Jenny is asking politely Lila to play with her, but the answer is always "no, I will call my friend Jessica (a neighbor) to come and play together".
- ii. Jenny is looking for her sister during breaks, but Lila never let her to join her company.
- iii. Every Friday Lila invites at home her best friends Jessica and Mary. Even though Lila's parents have told her involve Jenny in their games, unfortunately, Lila rarely keeps her promise and she usually yells at Jenny, calling her names, every time she was trying to play with her and her friends.
- iv. Lila begs her parents to invite also another friendly family who has a girl who is Lila's classmate. Jenny's parents enjoy this family's company so they invite them. Lila has a lot of fun with her classmate, but she never allows Jenny to join them.

8. Next each group is asked to make the correspondence between statements said and thoughts. In some instances, some statements may fit to more than one sentence (Use Hand-out).

Thinking: *Never mind. Maybe Lila has more common interest with her friend.*

Acting: *Never mind, I may call one friend of mine to play with her.*

Thinking: *Being sisters doesn't mean being friends.*

Acting: *I will try hard to find a good friend of mine to play with her.*

Thinking: *Never mind, I will find something more exciting to do .*

Acting: *I may ask my mother to go out for seeing a cinema movie instead of staying home.*

Thinking: *Never mind, I will take with me some materials to make some interesting hand crafts and my sister and her friend may be interested to join me.*

Acting: *I will ask my parent to invite one of my friend's family once per month.*

### ***Take Home Activity***

Children are encouraged to ask their parents if they have ever been rejected either as children or as adults. It's useful if parents personal experiences of rejection and talk about their feelings and their actions to deal with this situation.

## **Activity 7: : My sister hates me**

### *Learning Goal*

Children will be able to understand that there is something that they can do to deal with siblings' behavior (rejection) like asking for help, seeing situation from a different perspective, thinking positively and making an action plan.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Process different ways of thinking and acting in order to deal with rejection siblings' rejection.

### *Age Group*

Late Primary

### *Level*

Basic

### *Materials needed*

Sheets of paper

### *Activity Steps*

**Same as Activity 6.**

## **Activity 8: My parents don't love me**

### *Learning Goal*

Children will be able to understand that there is something that they can do to deal with parents' behavior (rejection) like seeing situation from a different perspective, thinking positively and making an action plan.

### *Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Process different ways of positive thinking and acting, like focus on the positive things I can do, learn ways to destress when he gets angry in order to deal with parents' rejection.

### *Age Group*

Late Primary

### *Level*

Intermediated

### *Materials needed*

Manual

### *Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson by making a small introduction to the subject of rejection.
2. Read the story to the children.

**“My brother is always better than me”**



John is a 5<sup>th</sup> grader and he has learning difficulties in school. Every afternoon he is working on his homework by himself, but he finds difficult to do it. His mother is usually getting angry with him and she is yelling at him often. In tests John usually doesn't do well and his parents compare his achievement with his big sister's high marks. The parents usually say that he is lazy. Also, they are calling him stupid and silly. Moreover, his parents often compare John to his older brother Jimmy, who is an "A" student, and they often say: "You will never achieve, what Jimmy has done", "You are not half as good as he is". John is very sad and he tends to cry often due to his parents behavior. He is very stressed because even though he tries hard, still he cannot get to make them happy. John is very good in tai kwan do. When the parents attend his practice they have good praise for him but, they always make comments such "We wish you were as good in the school work as you are in tai kwan do. Your brother is good at everything he is involved".



3. First, help the children to process and reflect on the story by asking them:

- How is John's daily life?
- Which are John's difficulties?
- How does he feel about his feelings?
- Why he feels like that?
- How John feels when his parents compare him with his brother Jimmy?
- What John thought about his family?
- What are your feelings about John?
- What actions can John take to change his situation?

4. Then relate the story to the children's own experiences:

- Can you remember one time that you have felt ignored or neglected or rejected by somebody in your family?
- How did it feel?
- Did you talk to somebody about that situation?
- Did you do anything to change that situation?
- How did you feel after you have done so?

5. Divide the children into 4 groups and give each group one of the following scenarios of John's daily life.



- i. Every afternoon he is working on his homework by himself, but he finds difficult to do it. His mother is usually getting angry with him and she is yelling at him often.
- ii. In tests, John usually doesn't do well and his parents compare his achievement with his big sister's high marks.
- iii. The parents usually say that he is lazy. Moreover they are calling him stupid and silly.
- iv. *"You will never achieve what Jimmy has done", "You are not half as good as he is".*
- v. When the parents attend his practice they have good praise for him but, they always make comments such: "We wish you were as good in the school work as you are in tai kwan do. Your brother is good at everything he is involved".

6. Then ask each group to answer the following question based on each scenario:

- What John can do differently in that case?
- How can John see her parents' behavior in a different way?
- Who can ask for help/support?
- What John can do to feel happy?
- How can John think positively in each case?
- What action may John make to change the situation of rejection into situation of acceptance?

4. Start a discussion in terms of problem solving. John has a problem. What steps can take to resolve it? Students brainstorm actions to be taken. Examples: Ask for help, learn to focus on the positive things he does have (e.g excellent in tai kwan do), learn not to get very upset (control his anger) when is criticised by his parents, learn ways to destress when he gets angry.

### *Take Home Activity*

Children are encouraged to ask their parents if they have ever been rejected either as children or as adults. It's useful if parents personal experiences of rejection and talk about their feelings and their actions to deal with this situation.

## **Activity 9: Divorce: A trying time for any child**

### *Learning Goal*

Children will be able to show more understanding towards the parents' behaviours and give alternative explanations to them and also learn not to take parents' behaviours personally.

*Learning Outcome. By the end of this study unit, I will be able to:*

Process positive tracking in explaining and dealing with parents' behaviors.

*Learning Goal*

*Age Group*

Late Primary

*Level*

Advanced

*Materials needed*

Sheets of paper

*Activity Steps*

1. Start the lesson by making a small introduction to the subject of rejection and in divorce situations this may be the case.
2. Read the story to the children.

**“Susie lives in two homes”**

Susie's parents have gotten a divorce last year, when she was in 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Susie has been upset and sad and sometimes confused. She usually sees her dad every other weekend and in the week between her visits, her dad has promised to call her every night. But he calls no more than once per week. At the end of school period Susie participated in a music concert playing flute. She had begged his dad to come and seeing her and he has promised that he will try to do it, but finally he didn't come. Also this summer has promised to Susie that they will go for few days holiday. But again this didn't happen. Susie's daddy most of the times doesn't keep his promises to her. This makes Susie sad and disappointed. Also, sometimes when she goes to his house, he is busy with work and he does not spent lots of time with her. Susie wants to play with her dad or go to the park, but they rarely can do something like that. This year Susie feels that her daddy doesn't love her at all, because he forgot to call her at her birthday. Susie feels neglected and she feels her dad does not care that much about her. Sometimes she feels that maybe her dad doesn't like her at all or he doesn't enjoy her company and she is convinced that she is not at all in his dad's priorities.

3. First, help the children to process and reflect on the story by asking them:

- What emotions do Susie experiences due to this situation?
- Did you ever being in a similar situation?
- Have you any friend being in a similar situation?

4. Split children into 6 groups and give them the following 3 questions to think of the answers:

- Do you have any ideas how to help Susie feel better when she experienced rejection by her dad?
- From whom can she ask for help?
- What else can she do to deal with this difficult situation?

5. Next, give the groups the following 6 statements and ask the children to work in groups to think an alternative (positive) explanation (positive tracking) in each case that shows a positive thinking (positive tracking exercise) into the sentences.

- *“My dad does not call because he does not care”.*
- *“My dad didn’t come to see me in music concert because she doesn’t love me”*
- *“He forgot to call me in my birthday”.*
- *“He does not keep her promise to go for holidays together, as promised”.*
- *“He always works and does pay attention to me, because he doesn’t enjoy my company”.*
- *“Since I am not in his priorities, he doesn’t love me”*

6. In closing, we want to communicate to the children, that no matter what your parent does (which may be perceived as rejection), we need to think of alternative ways, which also may mean showing more understanding towards the parent and also learn not to take it personally. For example, you can change the way of thinking from: *“My dad does not call because he does not care”* to *“My dad does not call even though he loves me very much because he had a really difficult day with a lot of problems at work”*. The parent may have their own problems to sort out and they cannot sometimes think straight. At this point is important to explain children that a helpful way of thinking rejection is to focus on evidence that prove the opposite that means acceptance. For example, *“My dad always tell me how proud is for me”, “I can see that my dad really be sorry when he cannot keep his promise to me” etc.*

A possibility is in the discussion is to bring up the idea the child to start to assert himself/herself in a polite way to the parent sharing their emotions. For example, *“Dad it hurts me when you do not call when you promised to. Could you please do not do this anymore?”* or *“Dad you always work and I feel you do not pay attention to me anymore. Could you please spend some time with me?”*