



Project Title: Becoming parents - Supporting the parental role with symbols and drama

Project number: 2023-2-HU01-KA210-ADU-000174791

"Engaging Parents and Future Parents Through Creative Techniques to Addressing Contemporary Parental Challenges"

This case study examines three workshops conducted as part of the Becoming Parents project, designed to analyze the evolving dynamics of parenthood amidst modern societal, economic, and cultural challenges. The workshops engaged both parents and future parents, fostering collaboration between those with experience and those preparing for the role. These activities helped participants think deeply about their roles as parents or future parents.

- Name of the partner organization: **Active Citizens Partnership**
- Name of the practitioner(s): **Cynthia Tzima, Anastasia Argyropoulou**

Date of session	Theme / topic of session	Number of participants
15/11/2024	Symbol Work with Chess	12
15/11/2024	Role-Playing with Nonviolent Communication (NVC)	12
22/11/2024	Storytelling and Narrative Activities	12

- **Hosting and organization:** (Any relevant information regarding organization of the workshops, eg. partner organization, space, etc.)

Both organizations: We cooperated with the Esperino Epal Syrou and Esperino Gymnasium LT Syrou which are schools actively involved in non-formal and informal education initiatives, participating in activities that promote social empowerment and raise awareness among its students. While the space used for the workshops was not ideal, efforts were made to ensure that participants felt comfortable and at ease throughout the sessions.

- **Participants:** (Please provide a short description of the profile of the participants)



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The workshops brought together young people preparing for parenthood and current parents, with varying levels of experience. Participants came from different backgrounds, with different experiences and ideas about the parenting topic.

Future parents contributed fresh ideas and enthusiasm, while current parents shared practical wisdom and real-life experiences. This mix fostered dynamic discussions and a collaborative learning environment, enriching the overall training process.

- **Summary of the process:** (about 5-10 lines)

This series of workshops engaged participants in all activities shared in the Becoming Parents training such as —symbol work, role-playing/drama and storytelling—to explore parenthood in a modern context. Through this exploration, it becomes evident that engaging both future and current parents in meaningful, interactive activities fosters personal growth, improves communication, and strengthens the overall parenting experience.

Current parents can mentor future parents, sharing stories of their successes and failures. This mentorship helps future parents avoid common pitfalls and approach parenting with confidence. In turn, future parents often remind current parents of the importance of adaptability and lifelong learning. Future parents often learn about the realities of parenthood by hearing firsthand accounts from current parents.

This exchange builds mutual empathy and understanding and it's a very good case study. When both groups work together, they build a helpful community. These communities are important for sharing resources, giving emotional support, and forming connections that last beyond the workshop or seminar.

- **Detailed description of the process** (including the names of methods and practices used, and any changes towards plans if it was needed)

Workshop 1: Symbol Work with Chess

Integration of Context: The participant profile highlighted a diverse group facing economic and societal pressures. This informed the focus on how modern challenges—like the housing crisis and changing family structures—intersect with parenting.

Methods Used:

Participants used chess pieces to symbolize family roles (e.g., King/Queen as parents, Pawns as children).

Activities included discussions on stability (King/Queen) versus potential (Pawns), and role-playing scenarios of family dynamics.

Execution:

Participants discussed how economic factors, such as the lack of job stability, create uncertainty in family planning.



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The metaphor of chess as a strategic, cooperative endeavor allowed participants to articulate their struggles with balancing independence and commitment to a future family.

Adjustments: Facilitators included additional debriefing time to connect symbolic roles to the societal expectation of parenthood and the personal fears participants expressed.

Workshop 2: Role-Playing with Nonviolent Communication (NVC)

Integration of Context: Marshall Rosenberg's Nonviolent Communication (NVC) theory was used to explore empathetic communication in resolving conflicts, reflecting the participants' multicultural and multigenerational backgrounds.

Methods Used:

Role-play exercises were designed around common family disagreements.

Participants practiced identifying observations, feelings, needs, and requests as per NVC principles.

Execution:

Scenarios included work-life balance conflicts and intergenerational misunderstandings.

Participants practiced reframing statements to express needs without judgment, fostering deeper understanding and cooperation.

Workshop 3: Storytelling and Narrative Activities

Integration of Context: Transgenerational issues and societal changes were core to this workshop, addressing concerns about trauma, health, and financial instability. The participants were inspired to improve their relationships and grow personally.

Methods Used:

Yarn-based storytelling: Participants wove a symbolic web by sharing parenting values and personal challenges.

Strength-focused reflections: Participants discussed behaviors they wished to emulate or leave behind and helped to shape a positive role model.

Execution:

Activities highlighted how trauma and financial barriers influence perceptions of parenthood.

Participants shared narratives about the impact of cultural norms and community support on their decisions.

The facilitators took care to approach the topics discussed with sensitivity. They made sure participants could choose not to share personal experiences while still being part of the larger conversation.

Main topics, issues that turned up (without names, only a summary)

- changes in society and how it affects children
- financial difficulties
- difficulties to balance careers and families
- large percentages of one parent families and how it affects children



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-loss of extended families and

Reflection of one's own role as a practitioner (what did you learn during the process, what was hard, what were the highlights, about 5-10 lines)

Facilitating these workshops required navigating sensitive topics while fostering a safe and inclusive environment. The most challenging aspect was addressing deeply personal issues, such as trauma and financial insecurity, without overwhelming participants. The highlight was observing participants develop empathy and self-awareness through symbolic and narrative exercises, allowing them to explore modern parenthood with renewed perspectives. These workshops underscored the importance of integrating real-world challenges into creative activities, bridging abstract concepts with tangible applications for participants' lives.

- **Evaluation of the participants:** (what sources for participants evaluation you used, how people evaluated the process)

The evaluation of the workshops was conducted with, group discussions, and facilitator observations. Participants reported that the diverse methods—symbol work, role-playing, and storytelling—were engaging and effective in addressing modern parenting challenges. Many highlighted the value of exploring empathy, self-awareness, and conflict resolution through creative and relatable activities.

All participants mentioned that there are many societal changes that impact parenting and they need to be informed. Participants expressed appreciation for the safe, inclusive environment that encouraged open dialogue and reflection. They noted that the activities allowed them to connect with others, gain new perspectives, and build practical strategies for family dynamics.

Some participants suggested extending certain workshops, such as storytelling and NVC, to explore topics in greater depth.

Overall, 98% rated the workshops as very useful, with 96% expressing that they would recommend the sessions to others for their combination of introspection, creativity, and real-world application.

- **Pictures** (if participants agreed):



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