

SociAl competences
and FundamEntal Rights
for preventing bullying



safer

SAFER - NEWSLETTER - ISSUES 2&3 - JUNE, 2022

THE SAFER PROJECT

Project number: 621528-EPP-1-2020-1-IT-EPPKA3-IP1-SOC-IN

Be the HERO for reducing bullying to ZERO!

IN THESE ISSUES

1

OVERVIEW

2

The PROGRESS
of the project

- GOOD PRACTICES and CREATIVE PROGRAMS for bullying prevention and intervention
- TEST to prevent bullying
- The SAFER EDUCATIVE KITS for students, teachers and the community

3

First
FACE-TO-FACE
meeting



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

OVERVIEW



Welcome to the 2nd & 3rd Issue of the **SAFER** Newsletter!

SAFER - SociAl competences and FundamEntal Rights for preventing bullying is a three-year project funded by the Erasmus+ Programme (KA3-Social inclusion and common values: the contribution in the field of education and training) of the European Union that aims to develop and implement an innovative method for preventing school violence and bullying for fostering inclusive education.



The project is coordinated by the Fondazione Hallgarten Franchetti Centro Studi Villa Montesca in Italy and the partnership consists of the Giunti Psychometrics Srl (Italy), The Cyprus Observatory on School Violence - Cyprus Pedagogical Institute (Cyprus), the Center for Intercultural Dialogue (North Macedonia), the Association Roditeli (Bulgaria), Universidade do Algarve (Portugal), the European Anti-Bullying Network (Belgium) and the Regional Directorate of Primary and Secondary Education of Crete (Greece). The project will develop training materials for teachers, parents, students and members of the educational community.

The **PROGRESS** of the project

2

Since the kick-off meeting of the consortium in April 2021, the partners have made a significant progress regarding the deliverables of the project. In this Newsletter, you will find out more about:



Good practices and creative programs for bullying prevention and intervention

The SAFER Questionnaire

The SAFER educative kits for students, teachers and the community

A. GOOD PRACTICES AND CREATIVE PROGRAMS for bullying prevention and intervention: What is new in the SAFER research?

The importance of bullying in the last two decades has produced hundreds, if not thousands, of papers on the topic. So why another research? Because the work done in the **SAFER** project starts from a different standpoint: from the standpoint of the schools themselves with their main actors (students, teachers, parents and the community). We can say that the analysis of best practices has used a Whole School and Community Approach (WSCA), which is the main innovation of the **SAFER** project.

Furthermore, large part the previous researches were stimulated by the definition provided by Olweus. Although that definition has proven to be tremendously useful as a catalyst for research,

in the present study we have proposed a revised and, let's say, more pervasive definition of bullying that takes into account recent theoretical advances and empirical evidences, fostering the enhancement of the acquisition of social and civic competences; the promotion of common positive and democratic values and intercultural dialogue; the ownership of the fundamental rights. The idea was to select practices that prevent and tackle bullying in a holistic way, supporting young people at home, at school, in class and in their community. We have analyzed 24 successful practices in the 7 countries involved in **SAFER** project (prevention, intervention and mixed programs) that take into account several approaches, also mixing some of them. The practices foresee, school antibullying curriculum, peer approach, Social and Emotional learning, antibullying awareness campaigns, creation of a positive school climate, promotion of dignity and respect for all, the community involvement, prosocial behaviors and social-moral cognition, and also the development of the awareness of emotions, values, and mutual respect that are fostered through student participation in cooperative group work.

Because the literature about bullying puts in evidence that schools are struggling to figure out how best to address this issue, these practices can give to all the schools a valid help when they seek to identify a bullying prevention program to implement. In general, teachers have to face a confusing array of interventions, many of which have not been evaluated or have produced only marginal gains in reducing bullying behaviors. With the support of the SAFER research, they can better find the more suitable way for their bullying situation and which practice/program can be most effective, for whom, and under what circumstances.

Finally, this Report fits with what evidences now show:

- **that multifaceted approaches to reducing bullying in schools are more likely to succeed than single-component programs**
- **that bullying is more than an interaction between individuals, it is a socio-ecological**



phenomenon that occurs because of what happens in peer groups, families, schools, communities and the wider social environment.

All these actors can find, in the SAFER best practices Report, some helpful reproducible, concrete examples, and for sure, tips for reflection and discussion.

Maria Rita Bracchini
Fondazione Villa Montesca

Be the HERO for reducing bullying to ZERO!



B. The SAFER Questionnaire

With the aim of collecting information on bullying directly from the students, it was decided to design, adopt and administer a Questionnaire in the Bulgarian, Cypriot, Greek, Italian, North Macedonian and Portuguese schools participating in the **SAFER** experiment.

The first part of the questionnaire contains the TPB (Test to Prevent Bullying) questions. The TPB is a tool designed to assess the emotional climate in classrooms and help prevent bullying and cyberbullying. This test was developed by Nicola Botta, Anna Accetta and Isa Zappullo for Giunti Psychometrics. It is a 'semi-projective' questionnaire (i.e. a test in which an evocative image is shown and predefined reading keys are displayed) that measures various aspects of psychosocial adjustment and maladjustment in children, adolescents and young adults aged between 9 and 18. The test consists of 'graphic pictures' depicting neutral images representing episodes of everyday life in different socio-relational contexts: the images are deliberately made to be interpreted in different ways. For each 'picture' shown, the girl/boy has to choose from five alternatives the statement that she/he thinks best describes what the image-stimulus represents. The answers reveal a



more or less problematic perception of the context in which the girl/boy lives and a possible risk of maladaptive behaviour at group level (aggression, intolerance, anger, etc.). The questionnaire is anonymous, and the report consists of an aggregated document indicating the greater or lesser risk of developing - at class or school group level - bullying or cyberbullying dynamics. The test is based on a sample of 922 subjects (522 boys and 400 girls) aged between 9 and 18.

The second part of the questionnaire consists of a 'biographical questionnaire'. This questionnaire is also anonymous. It is a questionnaire developed specifically for the **SAFER** project by Prof. Stefano Taddei and Dr Bastianina Còntena of the University of Florence together with Giunti Psychometrics and the **SAFER** project partners. It consists of a series of questions that stimulate girls and boys to reflect on everyday life (at school or in extra school dynamics) and to seek answers based on their daily experience.

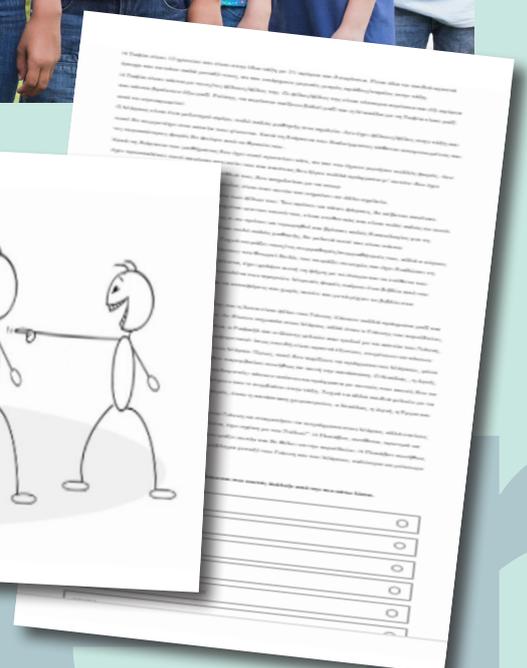
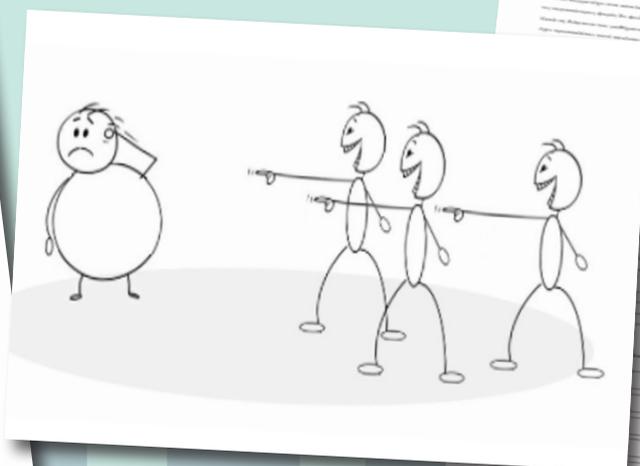
The biographical questionnaire consists of two sections. The first section allows us to 'take a snapshot' - based on a 'subjective' view by the girls/boys - of their 'perception and involvement or not in bullying dynamics' both at school and outside. In addition to bringing out the experience of bullying, the questions aim to explore the presence or absence of pro-social behaviour that can help to counteract bullying or, on the contrary, the presence of risk factors to be taken into account:



the questions explore specific dimensions, such as the level of empathy towards the other, the presence or absence of positive expectations towards bullying, the characteristics of situational factors that may favour or counteract bullying, social variables and group dynamics that may favour an environment conducive to bullying itself, such as the size and composition of the friendship groups to which they belong, interpersonal dynamics, whether or not they pay attention to the risk of loss of reputation, the influence of hierarchies, the presence or absence of specific 'pro-bullying' group norms such as bully reinforcement, avoidance, victim non-defence. In the interpretation of the answers, each question and each answer is entered into an interpretative grid that makes use

of the dimensions indicated above. The second section analyses the same dimensions but confronting the girls/boys with two "stories" in which some typical bullying dynamics are told. After reading the stories, the questions aim to bring out the interpretation that the girl/boy applies to the context described, also trying to stimulate a small process of identification with the characters in the stories. The stories can also be seen as a good opportunity to develop a debate on bullying issues. The different situations adopted in the stories and the questions put to the girls/boys are also placed in the interpretation grid adopted in the first part.

Paolo Lippi
Giunti Psychometrics



C. The SAFER educative kits for students, teachers and the community

The project **SAFER** is addressed to develop a new pedagogic approach in the field of preventing and fighting the bullying phenomenon. This approach is defined as “Whole School and Community Approach”. The WSCA intends to share understanding of community needs and capabilities in the way to not leave the schools alone in preventing the bullying situations. In order to offer a concrete and effective empowerment and integration of resources from across the community, promoting in the same time, a stronger social infrastructure, **SAFER** proposes some practice didactic tools addressed to teachers, community educators and students. The structure of the Handbooks have been delivered after an intense discussion during the **SAFER** Scientific Committee held in Florence the last May. The members decided to propose active instruments for felicitating the establishment of relationships within the community and between the school and other educative institutions (formal and no formal). The goal is to make more effective the prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery activities to increase the individual and collective awareness about the bullying effects and impact in students. Understand and meet the actual needs of the Whole Community, building the materials on the real life of students, educators and members of the Community is the main expected impact of the tools.

The **SAFER** project will realize two Didactic Kits and Handbooks. The first will be addressed to educators (as a whole). It will contain metamorphic vision of bullying and cyberbullying, informing about what is changing in the phenomenon. The Handbook will explore also Common myths about bullying and cyberbullying, for offering a guide about the stereotypes and the false ideas.

An entire section will be focused on a whole approach for preventing peer's violence and bully-



ing through the promotion of social/civic competences, common positive values and fundamental rights. The Handbook will propose exercises and activities for being used in the educative environment in schools and in other educative institutions (informal and non-formal).

The Kit for the students is conceived as a portable tool for autonomous activities to be realized by children and adolescents with the goal to create a call into action and better awareness about the measures to be undertaken for supporting the victims.

Both Educational Kits are OER (Open educational resources) and are downloadable on the **SAFER** website, starting from the beginning of September 2022.

Fabrizio Boldrini
Fondazione Villa Montesca



First FACE-TO-FACE meeting

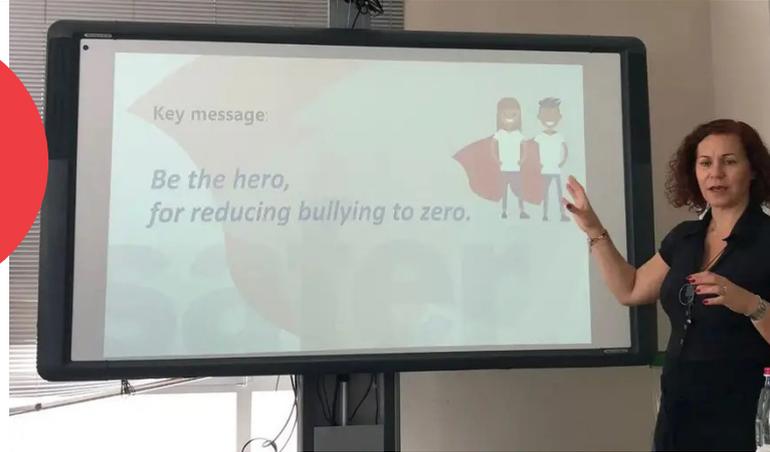
3

The first face-to-face meeting of the SAFER project team was hosted by Giunti Psychometrics, in Florence, Italy, on the 3rd and 4th of May 2022. During the meeting, the partners were given the precious opportunity, for the first time, to get to know each other, communicate face to face and share their expertise and their concerns about the phenomenon of bullying. The partners presented and finalized the achieved progress up to date, on each work package, according to each partners' responsibilities. Furthermore, the partners discussed and planned in detail the project's next steps regarding all packages and the implementation of the piloting phase.

Cyprus Observatory on School Violence Team

The slogan that will be used during the life of the project is

“Be the HERO for reducing bullying to ZERO”



Be the HERO for reducing bullying to ZERO!



Find out more about the SAFER project



www.safer-erasmus.eu



<https://www.facebook.com/preventingbullyingsafer>



https://www.instagram.com/safer_project/

safer

Photo credit to Anton Vassilev, Association Roditeli, Bulgaria