

WHY AN EARLY ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION?

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Abstract. Nature protection is increasingly becoming one of the most important concerns of contemporary society and of three major issues: deterioration prevention, environmental remediation actions and environmental reconstruction, which consist mainly of remedies, and preservation or maintenance of the de-polluted areas. Interest and love for nature are, for most children, instinctive. In addition, attitudes and beliefs of children formed at an early age are those retained for a better life. Therefore, the education in kindergarten has to originate in children's natural interest for plants and animals, for what nature means to them in general. This project is supported by Rector Ms Heidi Reithmeier / Germany, having in mind that Germany was the first that implemented such guidelines at the International Conference in Stockholm-under Agenda 21- introduced in school curriculum.

Introduction

The preschoolers must realize that environmental problems are global, of everyone and of each of us and our every negative action, however insignificant it is, may affect the nature in a destructive way.

The alarm signals released by experts, the explanations and statistics compiled by them undoubtedly have a role, but effective action involving and training in environmental sensitivity reached children through awareness and by training their emotional and volitional components.

Therefore, environmental education activities must be conducted in a relaxed atmosphere, where interest and communication encourage the initiatives, but also everyone's options.

The main purpose of environmental education is to give every individual the opportunity to express a personal attitude, responsibility towards the environment he/she lives in. Environmental education is as a specific skill and a way to

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understand the relationship between man and living environment, which belongs not only to him, but also to plants and animals.

The starting point of this exercise is the optics you need to express our respect for the natural environment that we all benefit from and that the future generations will inherit. Therefore, it is important that we, those who have the task of educating the little ones, have a better environmental conscience, so that the actions we are carrying out to be effective and credible in front of children.

1. Material and method

The main purpose of environmental education is to give every individual the opportunity to express a personal attitude, responsibility towards the environment he/she lives in. Therefore, education must start from children's natural interest for plants and animals, for what nature means to them, in general, and particularly the forest. It is important that we, who have the task of educating the little ones, have a better-shaped environmental conscience

The preschoolers must realize that environmental problems belong to the entire world, to each of us, and every action of ours can negatively affect the nature. Environmental education activities must be conducted in a relaxed atmosphere, where interest and communication encourage initiatives.

Given that the "**forest**" is the environment where they spend all their lives, here are protected and safeguarded and that almost all stories, poems and songs in the planned joint action take place in the forest - in all seasons - we have proposed, and had agreed with parents and children of the group, to organize the optional course: "THE SMALL ECOLOGISTS" (Project developed by the Clearing Forests Nursery, Satu Mare County, conducted in 2007-2008)

Thus, children will be taught and introduced into the mysteries of the forest - as a group - to do so that their powers remain forever fresh in environmental powers and can stop damaging the giving laboratory of air, life, health, recreation and good humor.

Through stories, poetry, reading pictures, songs, talks, practical work of planting trees, flowers, plays, dramatization, hiking and mountain tours in various locations, close or distant, we will seek to achieve our objectives and involve both children and parents, and also the community. Their involvement has created a partnership with the Department of the Forestry of Crucis municipality, to complete the green space in the period March 15 to April 15 (Forest Month) with saplings of various species: pine, spruce, larch and realization of flowerbeds.

Addressing the environmental education in kindergarten has certain methodological features; the ultimate goal of this approach is the adequate training and sequencing of environmental behavior of concrete actions to protect the environment.

The logic diagram approach to environmental education has certain formative stages that describe a method that can be followed by any teacher, making use of careful discipline specific content and methodology:

a. Perception and observation of nature. This first step may be best achieved through nature trips, excursions and camps. The first step of direct contact with environmental elements constitutes the premises for the next steps.

b. Determination of experiences and awareness of sensations and feelings of children. Following collection of environmental issues, children are attracted by the pleasure of looking at the clear sky, of breathing the fresh air of a forest, of listening to the murmur of a brook, etc. At this stage, it is the role of the teacher to discuss and draw attention to these issues and to highlight the benefits of a clean, healthy nature, and our participation in the natural systems of life and communication between the natural environment and us.

c. Involvement. Through discussion, having established the place and role of each one in space and time, we may find relevant ways of involving the individual, how we can help.

d. Accountability. This step is essential in forming an appropriate behavior structure. If there is involvement, there must be accountability. The steps referring to environmental education conducted at this level show the environmental performances. The default reason is that information accompanies and supports the sensory perception, sensations analysis, employment in natural living system, defining the role of staff, respectively, individual involvement and accountability.

e. The composition of a strategy for action. This step is the next move to a concrete action. The fact that, as teachers, we organize various activities with the children is not enough. Achievement, indeed important, would be to form that interest of the children and those skills which enable them to understand how to organize such actions and to act on their impulse.

In order to form an environmental conduct of the children, as we start from a simple but quite effective idea in terms of emotions and feelings: the transposition of the element: instead of the wildlife, a child who has suffered from human aggression. Put in the position of the assaulted one that cannot defend himself, the child will realize that he has to give "right to exist" to all the environmental elements around him. Gradually, he will understand that any action of destruction or extermination of any kind is very damaging because it spoils the balance of nature.

Given that at least in our area the forest starts "besides the house, begins and ends at the edge of heaven", the motivation was strong and we proposed "to penetrate the mystery of the forest" in an organized manner, and try to stop the mutilation of the "laboratory of the Earth".

To preserve and improve the environment is a primary goal for the whole society, a task whose performance should be coordinated and harmonized well in education.

In support of this educational behavior comes the educational program "Eco-Kindergarten" which has the aim to increase children's awareness on environmental issues, thereby putting the foundation aims to clarify the development of children belonging to the environment. I encouraged discussions and group work, and any initiative taken to protect the environment. This program outlines the strategy for action in environmental education, our unit level. The benefits that we believe the kindergarten has in the area of *Clearing Forests* (the continuation of Eco-Kindergarten program) are:

- Raising children aware of the need to maintain a clean, healthy and aesthetical environment;
- Teaching the children to love the Earth and all elements in its composition: water, plants, animals etc.
- Educating children for preserving the health of the environment in which they live;
- Acquiring specific rules of conduct to ensure balance between human health, society and environment;
- Forming disapproving attitudes toward those who violate the rules specific to the preservation of environmental hygiene;
- Promoting our kindergarten to the rank of Eco-kindergarten, according to EU standards, as a result of educational activities carried out and by running the said program.

Purpose:

- to educate children and local community to maintain a cleaner and healthier environment, to rationally use the natural resources and to maintain the ecological balance and to preserve nature for future generations.

Objectives:

- To sensitize and make the local community, children and parents aware of environmental issues;
- To create in the kindergarten and in its surroundings a pleasant environment, through planning and landscaping;
- To form an ethical behavior, citizenship;
- To form some conservation habits;
- To involve children in the collection of recyclable materials - Paper and Bottles.

Example of a didactic project:

GROUPS: Large

Category of activity: integrated activity

(Environmental Knowledge, Education Language, Mathematics Activity)

Unit Content: Nature-Wild Animals

THEME: 'little explorers'

Means of implementation: Training Game

Type of business: Better knowledge

Fundamental objectives: the assessment of skills acquired by children in the project "wild".

Operational objectives:

• *Cognitive:*

- To describe a wild animal.
- How to classify animals according to the way they feed.
- To briefly narrate about their loved pet.
- To figure out an animal by a description or a riddle.
- To count the animals and to compare them quantitatively by mail.

• *Psycho-motor:*

- To handle the materials properly for their duties.

• *Affective:*

- To love and protect animals.

Teaching strategy:

Methods and procedures: conversation, explanation, the cube method, brainstorming, riddles and role-play.

In computer education: with wild animals, plastic cube, plush animals, and coins.

Forms of organization: individual, teams.

Game rules:

- Children respond to teacher questions,
- They handle the teaching material (divided into 3 groups),
- The team that accumulates the most points wins.

Teaching load:

Children will group animals according to the place where they live, they will describe the animals, and they will count and make sentences about their pets.

Elements of the game: surprise, race, applause, riddles.

Framework Objectives:

• Training and exercise habits of care, protection and environment protection in order to encourage a positive attitude towards it.

• Develop interest in create a balanced environment:

• Learning rules / rules aimed at ensuring an ecological balance character of human health, society and environment and a disapproving attitude towards those who violate these rules.

Reference Objectives:

- To know the components of the surrounding world: plants, animals, birds, wind;
- To conduct some simple experiments to discover the environment pollution factors (natural and artificial);
- Identify forms of relief - hills, valleys;
- Charge / differentiate the existence of interactions between humans and the environment;
- To explore reactions of plants, animals in different situations under the influence of environmental factors;
- To observe for a period of time - a specific topic - the development of a plant, to investigate;
- To collect and observe nature by taking tours, trips in the wild;

Conclusions

Briefly said, the fundamental "equation" of life on this planet is to find a balanced ratio between the economic needs and the ecological capacity of the planet, understood as a real capital of nations, clearly limited and easily perishable in terms of poor management. The man is an active factor in the spatial and temporal dynamics of the biotic environment in general and forests in particular. The actions of the anthropogenic factor can be only positive conclusions, especially since today a growing number of scientists consider environmental degradation in general, and forests, in particular, as the most dramatic crisis of mankind.

The curiosity of children's leads to the accumulation of knowledge about the environment, about its protection, which contributes to the children's logic and correct thinking and to the interpretation of the issues around them.

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