**שם הקובץ: תפיסות של מורים לגבי פיתוח כישורים חברתיים**

**Teachers as professionals in supporting shy students**

Teachers teach classrooms that include students with diverse social characteristics, including shyness. Shyness is defined as a temperamental trait characterized by increased anxiety, concerns, and self-awareness in social situations (Rubin, Coplan, & Bowker, 2009). Because the present era is based on communication, teamwork and initiative, shy people find it difficult to achieve their goals in personal and professional aspects and might develop feelings of loneliness and missed opportunity. At school, it also impairs the active engagement of these students in the learning processes.

The school is a social setting that students come to on a daily basis, so the teacher has the opportunity to support them and increase their social engagement. In order for this support to occur, the instruction must be oriented towards all students. Teachers have to perceive their student holistically and teachers training must build the effectiveness of the teacher's support.

To better understand teachers' perceptions of shy students, fifteen interviews were conducted with educators (Korem, 2016). One main finding that emerged from the thematic analysis is that teachers' perceptions of these students differ from the definition of shyness in that they do not adequately address the internal experiences of these students. Teachers tend to relate mainly to the behavioral aspect of the phenomenon, meaning to the quiet and passive behavior of these students. The problem is that, as a result of this conception, teachers tend to choose behavioral support strategies, for example, encouraging shy students to participate in class discussions.

In contrast, teachers will be professionals as they focus on shy students' inner experiences. When they do, they will naturally tend to choose strategies that reduce anxiety and concerns in the classroom.

In teacher training programs students should acquire information about shyness and practice instructional strategies which reduce anxiety in the classroom. By this way, the teacher will become a professional in supporting shy children and foster their social skills that are so central in the contemporary era.

**The diverse socio-cultural classroom: How can teachers foster the competence of students to cope when being teased?**

The classroom is a diverse socio-cultural context and, as a result, there are expressions of teasing between students. Frequent exposure to teasing impairs students' sense of security/safety, damages the learning process, and may negatively affect their self-image. The tendency of teachers in these situations is to protect the afflicted student and make the offending student to apologize.

In this presentation, another vie will be presented: the development of students' competence, when being teased, to deal effectively. The proposal is based on the need to develop students' social competence outside the classroom's boundaries and thus aid them develop social skills that are so necessary in relation to the present era. According to this approach, the teacher supports the students' personal lives on the emotional-social level.

 In order for teachers to be able to act, as professionals, in these situations, a three-stage thinking framework was developed. This framework is based on a combination of literature review and practice-based knowledge collected from educators. Of note, this proposal does not replace the importance of fostering a positive social classroom climate, but rather complements it.

The thinking frame corresponds with the Hill and O'Brien' model (1999). The first stage relates to giving expression to the hurt feelings of the student. The second stage relates to the cognitive processing in regards to aspects of the self with which the vulnerability is increased. The third stage involves the acquisition of an effective response repertoire in situations of being teased. The presentation will explain and illustrate the different stages and the importance of the order in which they are organized.

Teacher education should discuss the framework while incorporating role-playing and lesson plans, thus building the effectiveness of teachers. This training is part of a professional development of teachers and enhances their professional ability to support the students holistically. Thus, aid them develop competency to cope in a diverse socio-cultural classroom and society (Ten Dam & Volman, 2007).