



EDUCATION RECOMMENDATIONS

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Project
"Ethnic culture and Creativity in Early
Childhood and Pre-Primary Education"

EDUCATION RECOMMENDATION

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INTRODUCTION

Ethnic culture is the national cultural foundation of essence, strength and survival of each nation.

Ethnocultural education of a child and creativity fostering start in the family. This is where the child learns to speak his native language, by also starting to perceive his national and civil belonging; this is where he learns of his family origins and its traditions from his parents and starts to get to know cultural and common human values of his nation.

Due to various reasons, a family does not always succeed in fostering its ethnic culture and child's creativity. Many psychologists tend to stress family reasons of human anxiety and fears; yet, social influences are of no less importance because the society is the family of a family. Therefore, in case it is ill, all families that belong to the given society have to fight with the same disabilities. Provided that the social culture is healing, families that live there also learn to heal; they have less dissension, more kindness and forgiveness; they have less grief, less bitterness and far much more compassion and love (Clarissa Pinkola Estes, Ph.D., 1992).

Nowadays traditional characteristics of family as well as its lifestyle are changing. As the family and the educational institution have become equal partners in the education process, their cooperation shall be targeted at the common goal, which is important for the child's future, namely cultural and creativity fostering. As the educational institution and the family are cooperating closely in the ethnocultural education process, a nationally aware, proactive, mature, responsible

and creative community is built.

This recommendation was inspired by educators from three countries, namely Lithuania, Latvia and Finland, who visited each other in their educational institutions, thus becoming acquainted with child's education and learning models and sharing their good practice.

The role of early childhood and pre-primary education is to ensure the broad-based development of children. This refers to ensuring that all children are able to develop their cognitive, social, emotional, ethno-cultural, psychological and physical skills to the best of their abilities, preparing them for their further life.

As society becomes more diverse, educators, individuals and especially children will find it useful to learn more and find synergy between modern life and ethnic values.

I. The Necessity of Fostering Ethnic Culture and Creativity

“Culture is nation’s spiritual expression”.

Many ethnologists, ethnocultural researchers, ethnographers and scholars have analysed ethnic culture, its essence and understanding. According to the majority of them, ethnic culture shall be perceived as experience of one or several generations of a nation passed on from generation to generation and a system of cultural values of a nation which is constantly renewed. It is referred to as the essence of the nation’s existence, survival and strength as well as a basis of national culture. Ethnic culture is expressed by the native language, lifestyle, household traditions, morality, worldview, religion, mythology, folklore, folk art etc. It also has specific traditions of agrotechnics, architecture, sculpture, clothing, astronomy, education, medicine, hygiene, food and various other customs. Ethnic culture expresses uniqueness and singularity of a specific society or community.

We have noticed that culture is, first of all, a relationship between people and the environment. Relationships are also a creative process as traditions and customs of a nation are formed through creativity which later are passed on other generations through relationships.

The ethnic relations refer to the area of the discipline that deals with social, political and economic relations between races and ethnicity in all level of society. Ethnic relations have mostly been discussed in term of multiculturalism at the level of political policy. Also, ethnicity has been defined as a family’s common ancestry through which identify develops as a result of evolved shared values and customs (McGouldrick, Giordano, and Pearce, 1996).

Many authors analyse global changes and they emphasise a contradictory impact of globalisation processes on the individual, his identity and personal world (Held; Mcgrew; Goldblatt; Perrason, 2002; Bauman, 2007; Giddens, 2000, et al.). On the one hand, globalisation is seen positively as a factor strengthening the individual's relationships with the world; on the other hand, it is considered a phenomenon weakening both relationships with the local community and one's national identity.

When analysing national identity formation processes and features, their importance on the individual and the place in the individual's identity system, Antinienė made the following conclusions in her scientific titled "Individual's National Identity Initiation. Socio-psychological interpretations of this Process":

- The area of national identity exists in the multidimensional personal identity framework. National identity is a complex and dynamic phenomenon whose formation process starts in the early childhood and it constantly continues. As the social context changes, it might also change. National identity is characterized by latency. Although, as claimed by Levinas (1948), conscious dependence to a national group is a cable of mental health, people often tend to fail to become aware of their nationality. And it is only in a specific circumstance (when there are some obstacles) its importance on a person emerges. The understanding of origin of one's national identity differs significantly. It is revealed by means of several meanings: obligations, attachment, needs etc. National identity is described as the experience of an individual's dependence to a national community which is referred to as "national sentiments", "affective involvement" etc.

- The content of national identity construed subjectively depends on how a person experiences the internal nationality, whether he has considered the question of his national identity and to what extent he is obliged to the nation.

Cultural elements play an important role because cultural aspects show the uniqueness of Baltic and Nordic people or ethnics whereby it must be integrated in daily life in order to have respectable relationship between the ethnics as well as live in a harmonious country. The ethnic culture as also important in order to sustain the current safety of our countries as well as the safety of the nation itself in the future.

II. The Importance of Ethnic Culture and National Identity in Children's Education

Many scholars also actualise the importance of nationality and national culture in their works and they highlight the relation with the process of personal development and learning.

On the basis of the insights of ethnologists, educators and psychologists we might claim that a national culture is developing and improving through nationality. Each must remain a particular representative and preserver of his own culture. When looking for ways to retain ethnocultural continuity, scientists pay particular attention to pre-primary ethnocultural and creativity fostering.

When fostering culture and creativity, a child is becoming free both aesthetically and ethically, and he can continue the creative tradition, thus becoming more receptive to professional arts, music, literature and culture, and he feels a higher need for other nations culture, by also understanding it better, and he values it.

The language of the nation, its folklore, art and traditions through which nationality is expressed are of particular value and they are necessary to pass on, so ethnic culture is an important part of pre-primary education contents. Usually the connection between a child and national culture is built at an early age, and its culture becomes part of the human self. As the child forms the understanding of national culture integrity, education contents need to encompass cultural areas and values available to the child.

Not only do historical memory, proverbs, sayings, riddles, customs and folk art reflect rich social culture and best human qualities such as courage, humanism, devotion to Homeland, honesty, self-confidence and optimism, but also they teach us to understand and love beauty, they help us to grow respect for people and nature and to develop diligence and creativity. Moreover, the way children are acquainted with creative classics determined the society's attitude towards the nation's creation works and it partly determines the aesthetical view and uniqueness of our region.

First of all, creation is:

- easy to understand by a child due to its simplicity;
- helps a child to better understand daily life requirements, by also training him to experience beauty in daily life;
- has major significance in developing child's language skills;
- constitutes the first step towards the artistic world;
- has major significance in developing children's patriotic feelings.

III. Receptive Periods of Children's Development in the Context of Ethnic Culture and Creativity Education and Learning

3.1. Peculiarities of Pre-Primary Education

Although human nature is constituted by the same internal powers, they can vary in terms of their scope, structure, degree of development, manner of expression etc. This shows that every person is an individual whose nature is more or less different. These differences are particularly notable at various stages of human life because different internal powers dominate at each of them. On the other hand, they can be uncovered differently even at the same stage (Aramavičiūtė V.).

Social environment and psychological climate where a new-born child finds himself determines his development significantly. First of all, they define physiological comfort, which is so important in his first years of life, as well as first contacts, cognitive opportunities and further development of the child's personality.

A personality is usually described as uniqueness of an individual and a system of its stable characteristics, both congenital and acquired. Acquired characteristics are the result of interaction with social environment. The basis for personality development is built during the first five years when its fundamental structural elements are formed. Therefore, social environment is of particular importance during this period. It can affect child's development in one way or another.

Gučas (1981) specifies that each stage of life has specific features which change in time, thus giving a new shape to one's behaviour. There is the transitional phase between two stages where mental pe-

culiarities become less important and other features appear which serve as the most important criteria in determining personality structure. The dominating activities of the child as well as its contents and new relationships with adults play an important role in this process of change.

Children's pre-primary education has a special place. Children's education should be focused on the provision of necessary conditions for the development of a child. It is important in pre-primary education (during the receptive stages) that both parents and other educators provide an opportunity for children to develop his personality harmoniously, by applying positive methods of upbringing (Burvytė, 2016).

Not only is it very important to develop unique characteristics and abilities of a child which he gains when growing and being raised in a family or an educational institution, but also it is necessary to further develop his congenital characteristics.

In a hurrying society it is very important for parents and other educators to develop their own positive attitude towards a child even the most complicate life situations and to build their tolerance to the child's learning process by providing him with an opportunity to go through various experiences and feeling the natural consequences of his behaviour without damaging himself or others. The child must have an opportunity to get to know the surrounding context better. It is a game process where the child's initiative and the will to express himself are formed.

To summarise, it can be stated that in order to provide harmonious circumstances for children to develop and learn by also considering different stages of child's development, parents' awareness and readiness for parenthood remain importance before a child is born and as long as the child's receptive periods are still ongoing. In case parents are aware of the child's needs, they will be able to purposefully bring up the child and to help him to develop new physical and social skills and human values including ethnic culture and creativity.

3.2. The Role of Family in Children's Ethnocultural Fostering

Various authors believe that it is the family that plays the most important role in the child's socialisation.

The family is the most important child's educational institution and the most important microenvironment where children's socialisation takes place. It is in the family that human values which are the most important for parents and children are fostered and passed on (Rupšienė, 2001, p. 157). When discussing microenvironment, Aramavičiūtė (2005) also emphasises that the priority should be assigned to home as the primary, the nearest and the most direct educational institution. One must learn to value not only common feasts, leisure and holidays, but also national cultural heritage in the family. According to Lamontagne (1999), this strengthens the sense of belonging to the family, it improves communication and it builds trust which results in united the ability to join forces and help each other with problem solution (Gvildienė J., 2008).

According to various authors, the family is one of the crucial factors in social education where the ethic basis is extended. National peculiarities are first of all born and developed in the family. The family sustains the ethic type of the nation by passing it from generation to generation, it develops national traditions, customs, folk art etc. It can be claimed that the family is a mini nation. The family is spreading nationality within individuals and it gives basics for the existence of a nation. National education would be lacking the basis without the family. It educates the young generation not only automatically, but also actually, i.e. depending on the situation and family values. The spontane-

ous influence of a family is much more significant than conscious upholding. According to Maceina (1991), national education starts in the family before an individual is born. A new-born learns to speak and therefore think nationally. He encounters national creative works and is introduced to the national aesthetic world through tales, legends, songs and games. In order for education to be conscious, parents have to know the direction towards which they should act and to uphold their children properly, i.e. "...to touch the mind, the will and the heart in the new generation..." (Šalkauskis S., 2002).

The family is the centre of social life as it related the individual with other social group, and it passes on main norms and values to a child. The way the child is felling in the family determines the developments of his socialisation, maturity and sometimes even its result (Kvieskienė G., 2005).

Children's ethnocultural education starts from their parents' understanding who his parents and ancestors were, who they are and who their descendants are. If parents are full of love for their country and its people and if their attitude is based on the belief that in order to have a strong community (nation) we need to have a sense of community and the will to serve to each other, their children will also have the same belief. Therefore, parents are forming their children's behaviour by constantly influencing it.

It can be claimed that it is only in the family that the child's full-fledged socialisation takes place. Provided that parents do not demonstrate for their children that nationality is important, children who gain different knowledge in an educational institution will try out this knowledge on

their parents. Provided that their parents show that this information is not important for them, their children will refuse it. Therefore, ethnocultural development as one of the main education tasks of modern society should primarily start within the family. The family sustains the ethical type of nation by passing it on from generation to generation, it fosters national traditions, customs and folk art.

Children develop their ability to independently choose their acceptable modes of behaviour and their social beliefs which are first determined by external circumstances gradually gain autonomous nature. Children's behaviour tolerated by their parents is one of the major factors for pre-school children in the formation process of their social basis. The behaviour of children which is tolerated by parents who create conditions for children to learn to assess their actions (whether good or bad) serves as a guideline for the child to focus on determined and personally acceptable family rules. Beliefs can be neither borrowed nor purchased as they need to be formed by oneself (Bitinas, 2004).

To summarise, it can be claimed that parents' attitude towards national values has a positive impact on children's ethnocultural fostering. National cultural transmission within the family becomes the internal family culture for children, continuity of traditions and respect for past and future generations. Children will love national cultural values only if they see that their parents find them important.

3.3. Cooperation Opportunities between the Educational Institution and the Family in the Process of Ethnic Culture and Creativity Fostering

The most favourable atmosphere for a child to develop when the family and the educational institution function thoughtfully, by also engaging in the process and they act unanimously, i.e. they have the same understanding of education goals, objectives and ways as well as individual education peculiarities. Children should feel more at ease in such atmosphere and his personality formation should be much more successful.

Exclusive attention should be laid on modern ethnic culture and creativity fostering in an educational institution. As educators cooperate closely with the family in the educational process, a nationally conscious, proactive, mature, responsible and creative community is formed.

Therefore, in case child's ethnic culture and creative education starts first of all in the family, the educational institution is a source of knowledge and skills which helps the learner and his family to further develop and grow. One of the tasks of the educational institution should be the following: to continue fostering family values in the educational institution, to extend family's ethnic traditions, ethical norms and to provide circumstances for creativity to unfold.

Morgan and Morgan (2010) specify aspects which should be considered in aiming at useful partnership between parents and the educational institution:

- much attention needs to be laid on the partnership programme and activities in order for it to be useful, time-efficient, energy-efficient and resource-efficient;
- cooperation must be humane.

The educational institution refers to a community which has close social relationships with different adults and peers, and which influences the child's further integration in the society. Therefore, this community should provide the best possible conditions encouraging the child's cognitive, social and spiritual development (Trakšelys K., 2010).

However, collegial and constructive relationships between the child, his family and the educator are very important in the process of ethnic culture and creativity fostering in aiming at mutual communication and cooperation. Therefore, ethnic culture and creativity fostering should be a constant daily process rather than a discipline at the educational institution or some phenomenon which is only sometimes observed in the family context.

It is important that teachers and parents have a good relationship. Children feel more safety when they see that all the adults around them come along and share the same values and have the same rules. They understand children's behaviour better when they share the information they have, i.e. how the child reacts or behaves at home versus at kindergarten where there are a lot of children etc.

It is also important to know children's history at the kindergarten. Teachers can learn from families about their family culture and share knowledge of children's creativity and how to allow and encourage

children to use their creativity at home with parents. Best ways to do this is share the knowledge, share the information about what we do every day in kindergarten and why.

Considering children's age, growing opportunities and the need to broaden the horizons, all live and active forms of communication and development (learning) within the community are recommended:

- life and frequent socialisation;
- parents' participation in the activities of the educational institution such as collective assistance;
- sightseeing tours;
- meetings with craftsmen, singers and folk artists;
- family gatherings and calendar feasts;
- ethnographic activity;
- participation of children in traditional events, concerts, competitions, gatherings etc. of the local community;
- establishing children's, educators' and parents' ensembles or clubs, folk art, traditional crafts and other group activity circles;
- implementation of ethnic culture and creative projects.

The main basis for cooperation between the family and pre-primary education institution is the child, his wellbeing and harmonious development. In order to achieve this, both parents and the educational institution have to follow the same set of values which is, in this case, the intention to pass on ethnic culture and national identity and to

aim at the same goals, namely, to create a proper environment for personality development. The emphasised cooperation between parents and educators at pre-primary education institutions is associated with proper child care, effective support and wise control in order for all psychological, physical, social, intellectual and spiritual needs of the child to be fulfilled (on the basis of principles of positive education) in order to ensure harmonious development. When cooperating with parents, educators at pre-primary education institutions not only deal with children's development issues, but also foster cultural development in their lives; it is educators that serve as caregivers and guides by demonstrating their example (Burvytė S., 2013).

In summary, it can be stated that the family and the community are serving as ethnocultural and national identity transmitters as is used to the case earlier. The community of an educational institution is in a way a micromodel of a society which is aimed at better quality of children's life as each member of the community assumes particular responsibilities and obligations. Parents and educators are united by the common goal, namely child's wellbeing. Child's education is considered purposeful when the family and the educational institution achieve a common agreement and child's development in the family go together with child's education in the educational institution.

IV. Factors Determining the Success of Modelling of Ethnic Culture and Creativity Fostering

4.1. Creating an Environment

The environment around us is by all means influencing our daily life, and it affects us very significantly by causing various emotions. These emotions can be both positive and negative. Any sunny, bright and spacious room can make us feel much better as compared to a dark and cramped room. Material environment affects us as we are sensitive to space, its size and shape. The quality of interior influences our mood, state and health respectively. We do not have to think about this as it is our subconscious that receives these signals.

When creating an educational environment oriented towards culture perception and creativity fostering, we assume that it is necessary to employ measures which could be useful in cherishing home meant for the family. As a result, it is worth looking into how families from your community create and foster their home.

First of all, the most proper environment is the one where a child feels safe and where he trusts others. For this reason, we recommend departing from the “office” environment in the educational institution and get closer to the sense of home cosiness. This sense is created by the choice of interior design considering the habits of families within the specific community when creating their home environment and cosiness and of course without burdening the environment of the educational institution with educational tools which are always visible (e.g. they can be placed to cabinets, boxes etc., and only removed and used for a particular activity or task with children).

Pre-primary education institutions are attended by children coming from families representing diverse cultures, age groups, skills and needs, and therefore:

- the environment of the educational institution must be safe and adapted for children with various needs;
- we must build community relations in the educational institution which would enable the child and his family and teachers to feel safe, self-confident, trusting others, respected and understood;
- we shall not encourage competition between children in the educational institution. We believe that it is better to allow every child to reveal his unique abilities and needs and only compete with himself;
- children should receive enough individual attention in the educational institution.

In conclusion, it can be stated that in creating the environment of an educational institution fostering ethnocultural education, it is worth making the environment similar to their "native home" where a child would be willing to go daily by also missing it, and once he comes, he would feel welcome and safe just like at home. The environment of the educational institution should also cherish and encourage the child's eagerness to learn as well as his creativity which would help him to reveal his personal abilities and uniqueness.

4.2. Community Pooling

A sustainable community is not a given thing: it is a public wealth, which we need to create by ourselves.

A community refers to a specific group of people who share their beliefs and who aim at a common goal while working together for the sake of wellbeing of all its members. This group of people is united by specific common virtues abased on the common will, common beliefs, mutual help and the intention to create wellbeing. The main element in this group is constituted by people that share the same interest and similar traditions.

Members of a pre-school institution are constituted by educators (teachers) and the family in the broader sense. It is important to focus on building and fostering communication, cooperation and mutual learning culture here. Relationships based on cooperation should constitute the basis for a successful community.

Relationships between children, parents and educators are based on trust. When participating in various events, gatherings, educational activities and trips with their children, parents get a better picture of the educational institution. Discussions of child's achievements with teachers, practicing activities of the educational institution at home, participation at joint project activities, direct communication at the educational institution or using information technologies build close relationships between the child, his parents and educators.

Relationships between educators depend on the capability of the head of the educational institution to build relationships based on

mutual trust and to carry out teamwork in many respects. Moreover, personal qualities of educators, their loyalty to the activities of the educational institution and their positive attitude to the belief in lifelong learning are also influential.

Relationships between children and educators should be based on the ability of educators to increase children's interest in educational activities and the child's will rather than a mere need to engage in the process of cognition. The educator can also foster positive relationships together with the child by implementing projects, by learning something new together and by organising activities, assessing the success of the activities together with the child etc.

In aiming at more considerable attention to general and specialised competences, personal development and well-being and in order to better connect the contents of education with real-life relevancies and to apply information technologies more actively, community relationships with all possible partners, namely other educational institutions, various bodies and public organisations as well as business entities shall be established and developed purposefully.

Effective cooperation culture with partners as well as the strategy of education and learning provide an opportunity to extend the boundaries of the understanding of education and learning environment. Children can learn not only inside the educational institution but also outside it; for instance, in a library, museum or park, various companies or establishments. People can be found in any community of educational institutions or outside it who could help children to get to know and

improve their skills and to deepen their knowledge. Any member of the community who has specific knowledge understanding and experience in a particular sphere can serve as a teacher in some contexts.

Therefore, culture and creativity fostering should be carried out not only inside an educational institution but also outside it. One of the ways of strengthening such education is to organise sightseeing and thematic trips to nature, cultural centres, museums, theatres, national and regional parks, traditional handicraft centres, rural tourism homesteads cherishing traditions, research institutions etc.

Knowledge gained, constant learning from mistakes and experience help parents and educators develop their own self-confidence. Therefore, it is very important for both educators and parents to have enough time and ways for communication. We have noticed that the best and the most effective ways to communicate and understand each other is live (natural) communication. So, when organising feasts or other common gatherings in an educational institution one should give dedicate more time and give more significance to joint activities during which people could communicate more with each other, discuss carious questions and share good practice.

In summary, we might clam that a community is the most important condition in an educational institution influencing not only emotional well-being of a child, but also his achievements. Community pooling in an educational institution is one of the most important factors ensuring child's successful socialisation from an early age, and close relationships within the community based on mutual trust constitute a significant basis in fostering children's creativity and culture perception.

4.3. Tools and Techniques for Education Modelling

The main aim of ethnocultural education in implementing pre-school and pre-primary education programmes is to use ethnic culture as a source of enriching children's life, bringing them joy, creation, harmonious relations with others, takeover of national experience and revelation of inherent powers.

This can be achieved through:

- positive emotions, pleasant experiences and playfulness on which education and learning are based through engaging activities of a child, i.e. by sensing, touching, observing, looking closely, investigating, testing, creating etc.;
- providing opportunities for children to notice ethnical values in daily life in relation with creative activities;
- providing circumstances for the child to take over traditions, to collect ethnocultural experiences in the most diverse possible ways acceptable according to their age in terms of their nature and form;
- building an attitude on the basis of traditional cultural examples according to which the child would behave in a morally acceptable way marked with love and respect towards his close ones, people around, his peers and nature itself;
- encouraging children's engagement and participation in ethnocultural activities with parents (guardians), educators and other children;
- raising the interest of parents or guardians in ethnic culture and en-

couraging them prepare for the celebration of traditional fests, be their active participants and attend other ethnic culture events.

In order for national cultural virtues to become part of the child's identity they should, first of all, be on a part with his cognitive, sensual and operational abilities determined by his age, individual qualities and experience. Conditions should be provided for learners to experiences as much as possible, to feel these experiences and to express them. This leads to a probability that the outcomes of ethnic culture and creativity fostering will last long and will become part of the child's identity.

Children are characterised by extensive needs for creativity. For this reason, as the child grows, more attention should gradually be paid to the encouragement of children's creative expression. Creative works enable the development of children's mental abilities, they train them to relate theory with practice and they raise their interest in the given topic. It is very useful for an educational institution to organise, or take part in, national or international projects with give and opportunity for children and their parents' creative fostering.

It shall be noted that educational tools used should not replace the goal of education and they should remain mere tools to achieve the goal instead. For instance, a game, a tale or a song being heard or learned by a child is a tool which helps children to foster diverse virtues, abilities and competences.

Not only can educational tools (e.g. a song or a tale) be invoked to create an environment and opportunities for children to be educated

and learn in daily life, but also they can be useful in implementing various short-term and long-term projects.

Gaming

Willingness to play is a matter of instinct. It is a game rather than strict standards of conduct constitute the central artery of creative life as well as its core and brain stem (Clarissa Pinkola Estes, Ph.D., 1992).

The believe that pre-school institutions should, first of all, pay attention to creative games rather than mathematical, reading or writing skills, Children master adult world models while playing, thus being gradually prepared for independent life from an early age.

The pre-primary education process should consider the child's versatile will to act and learn though the fame as well as motion, creative activities, experiments, observation and questioning in cooperation with the child himself.

Therefore, children are learning through a game! As the game itself brings a lot of creativity, it is important to creative an environment in the educational institution which enables numerous fames according to various needs of a child.

Fairy Tales (Folklore)

Tales contain extraordinary powers: we do not even have to do anything as we can merely listen. Tales will provide us with ways and measures necessary for a torn spiritual thread to be recovered. Tales can make us thrilled, sad, curious, dreary or conscious. Therefore, tales serve as a medicine as they not only educate but also learn the child how to heal.

Tales are intended not only for children because, as it is generally known, personality development is a life-long process. When telling the same stories to children and ourselves from childhood to old age, we will look at them from a new perspective each time, by also revealing mature wisdom of life. Therefore, it is worth returning to the same tales from time to time, especially when it comes to very old tales (folk tales).

Tales, legends, stories, counting-out games, plays, traditional imitation of sounds by birds and animals, proverbs, riddles, patters, songs and other folklore, knowledge of dialects of various regions as well as your own dialect add to love for the native language, its beauty, richness and figurativeness, by also expanding the child’s vocabulary.

Tales are very significant for the development of child’s personality. Tales please children, make them happy, raise carious emotions, enable the understanding of various forms of goodness and evil in the world, the consequences of bad and good behaviour, develop attachment, respect towards the native land and nature and introduce to mythology. It is only through the purposeful and consistent use of folklore that the desired effects can be achieved when developing children’s values.

Tales can be, and should be, employed in educating children in numerous ways, without limiting oneself to calm story telling. They can serve as useful tools in implementing thematic activities during short-term or long-term projects.

Handicrafts, Art and Music

Practical production of traditional articles enables children to gain useful work experience and provide them with basics of traditional handicrafts and business which could be useful in further creative activities.

Folk art works enrich the child's aesthetic experiences and they help him to develop sensitivity to beauty, artistic perception, attention to details, and they help him to fulfil the needs for rhythm and harmony.

Ethnic music enables the spiritual connection with the history of the nation. Folk songs reveal national identity best, they develop children's understanding of morality, establish human relationships and communication, help them to take over knowledge on the basis of emotions and action and they encourage children's self-expression and creativity.

Meanwhile, the most archaic folk music is on a par with children's musical intellect, and it broadens their understanding and expression possibilities. The deepest human feelings are expressed by means of voice and melodies. Musical ethnocultural experiences encourage the relationship between the child and his parents. Joint musical practices add to the development of self-expression, give joy of being together and strengthen emotional relationships. Performing and listening to music contribute to the development of hearing and vision.

We believe that the integration of educational tools and measures help to achieve even better and more creative results in children's education. For instance, by joining music (songs) and art (drawing on paper or air) we will provide an opportunity for a child to experience

much more sensations and emotions. This method supports the child's linguistic development, motoric skills, drawing/writing skills, concentration, interaction, creativeness and gives skills for working in a team.

Food Culture and Preparation

When preparing various dishes together with adults, children develop self-confidence, they practice fine motor skills, they become familiar with various food products and, most importantly, traditional cuisine. While mixing, pouring, cutting, crushing and observing food he has an opportunity to not only enjoy the process, but also get knowledge of food with the help of the adults (for instance, what is are the benefits of one product or another on human body).

History and World's In-Sight

Love, sensitivity and respect towards nature and the determination to cherish it and enjoy its beauty in its various shapes and colours and be interested in the secrets of nature are encouraged by not only nature observation, but also the choice of images of nature in various tale genres. Natures in-sight is more comprehensible and more acceptable for children when it is illustrated by folk songs, hays, games, imitation of voices of birds and animals, teases and jokes.

While getting to know traditions of their family, community and nation, children perceive their identity deeper and they take over the experience, by also forming respect and the need to cherish traditions. Calendar fests and customs have particular significance as this allows children to experience the rhythmic pulse of nation and the flow of time.

When organising lessons on world and country history for pre-school children, the basis is formed in national identity development through the comparison with their national features and ethnoses with others. During the activities, children become familiarised with the country's history from first residents in the territory to modern times, from archaic social structures to interpersonal relationships.

Celebration of calendar festivals give an opportunity for an educator to not only pass over his ethnocultural experience, but also assimilate it with the present. Festivals unite all best elements that remained, and they represent the history of the nation.

CONCLUSIONS AND ASPIRATION

1. In implementing the project, we noticed that the answers to the question of the survival of a nation lie behind the importance of ethnic culture and creativity fostering by families while the receptive periods of children's development are still ongoing. The understanding of national identity is passed through the development, sustainment and transfer of ethnocultural traditions to children in the format which is acceptable and comprehensible for them, by also incorporating traditions and their rites in the daily life rhythm of the family and the educational institution.

2. The results of the project implemented have revealed that the survival of the nation depends upon the awareness of adults, responsible behaviour of parents and their proper example for their children while fostering ethnic culture and creativity. Ethnic culture and creativity fostering in a pre-school institution should constitute part of a daily life which is revealed through the development of national identity and family involvement. Project activities have revealed that in order to foster ethnic development of identity and ethnic culture it is not enough to merely organise activities for children; it is also necessary to involve the environment respectively where the entire community of the educational institution is operating together.

3. Meetings with communities during the project have revealed that the involvement of parents in modern activities of ethnocultural education of pre-school children is changing parents' attitude towards national traditional values and it has a positive impact on children's ethnocultural development. The transfer of national culture to children is becoming family's internal culture, tradition continuity and respect towards past and future generations. We have noticed that children take over national cultural traditions only if they see that their parents find

these traditions important.

4. It was confirmed during the project that in developing the environment of an educational institution fostering ethnocultural education this environment should be similar to the “native home” where a child would be willing to go daily by also missing it, and once he comes, he would feel welcome and safe just like at home. The environment of the institution should also cherish and encourage the child’s curiosity and creativity, which daily brings him closer to consistent uptake of ethnic culture.

5. Project activities have revealed that community pooling in an educational institution is one of the most important factors ensuring successful socialisation of a child since his early childhood. and relationships within the community based on mutual trust constitute a significant basis in developing children’s ethnic and national self-consciousness.

6. Creativity is one of the most important personal characteristics since one’s early childhood thanks to which a person is able to find solutions and modes of behaviour in various daily life situations. In today’s society, we tend to adapt to particular norms, standards and stereotypes which often steal not only freedom of choice but also the feeling of happiness. To refuse to be creative means to become “the same as others”, i.e. within your comfort zone. For this reason, we should create a favourable environment for the development of children’s creativity and to provide conditions for the revelation of individual qualities of each of them. An educator should act as a mediator aiming at inspiration of the learner to achieve his goals. If we raise creative generations, we will also gain the understanding of creativity as freedom. Meanwhile, the new generation will know from an early age how strong the creative power through the prism of personal fulfilment is.









Project partners

