



L.I.F.E. (Live!Improve!Feel!Educate!)

Sofinancira program
Evropske unije
Erasmus+



»TAKING CARE OF ANIMALS AND THEIR SOCIO-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT«

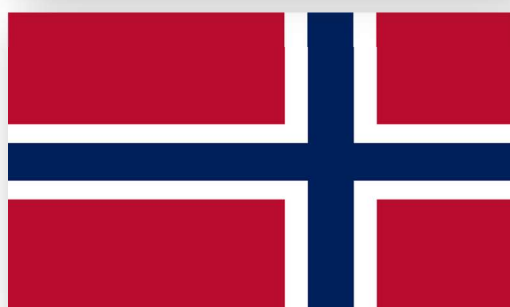
e-MAGAZIN Vol. 3



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Authors:

Strategic partners of the L.I.F.E. project



Strateški partnerji:

Czech Republic, <https://www.skolamalehostice.cz/>
Italy, <https://www.nuovadirezionedidatticavasto.edu.it/>
Norway, <http://www.skarungen.barnehageside.no/>
Slovenia, Litija, <http://www.vrtec-litija.si/>
Slovenia, Ljubljana, <https://www.vrtec-pedenjped.si/>
Spain, <https://www.escorialvic.org/>



The “**L.I.V.E. – Love! Improve! Feel! Educate!**” project involves 6 organizations from 5 countries (Czech Republic, Spain, Italy, Norway and Slovenia). The participating organizations are kindergartens and schools, which shall mutually exchange good practices and knowledge, as well as design modern educational processes in the field of social and emotional learning (SEL).

The aim of the project is to improve emotional and social competences in the field of self-awareness, self-management of one's emotions, eg. through higher level of empathy, social awareness, interpersonal skills, social inclusion and tolerance towards vulnerable social groups across all the project partner countries. Through this project, the participants aim to draw attention of the professional community and address the importance and value of the contents of social and emotional learning for children's holistic development and thus reduce the level of dropout from schools, and raise the social inclusion of vulnerable groups. In addition to children and employees of partner organizations, the project includes families of those children, as well as local and professional community.

In the e-magazine, good practices are presented that have been successfully integrated into existing educational curricula by the partner organizations. The project is designed so that each organization shall find ways to present the contents of social and emotional learning in various project activities. The number of children involved in the project in total amounts to over 2000. Partners share experiences and cooperate in implementing them in educational processes. It should be noted that special attention is also paid to the inclusion of participants with fewer opportunities. In all organizations, the program is designed so that children with fewer opportunities and their families can actively participate throughout the learning process. In all partner organizations, deprived children and their families will be provided with opportunities of active participation throughout the learning process.

Efforts put into the L.I.F.E resulted in various good practices that formed on the basis of exchange of knowledge and experience, which we present in e-magazines. Internships can be of use to anyone who wants to enrich their educational practice in the field of social and emotional learning. We want the



results of the project to be useful and applicable to related organizations across Europe.



»TAKING CARE OF ANIMALS AND THEIR SOCIO-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT«

e-MAGAZIN Vol. 3

In front of you is the 3rd magazine of the strategic partnership mobility project KA2 Erasmus + **L.I.F.E (Live! Improve! Feel! Educate!)**. At the end of the school year, partners from the Czech Republic, Norway, Slovenia and Spain prepared an exhibition in the local environment, where they presented the activities they carried out in the first year of the project.

In this magazine, we present good practices focusing on the field of empathy (social awareness) of children. In the evaluation of project activities and partial results of the project, it turns out that educational content with animals has a positive impact on children and that such activities are meaningful and useful for kindergartens and primary schools. With examples of good practice, we show how the development of a child's empathy can be encouraged by showing care and playing with animals. In the activities with the animals, children were calm, while interactive play and movement developed spontaneously. Touching and observing the animals gave the child strong sensory sensations, evoked tenderness and encouraged care and gentle handling.



Pets as therapists – Dogs shelter

The goal(s) of the activity:

Visit to dogs' shelter. Talking about the life of dogs in the shelter. *Why people put dogs to the dogs' shelter. Positive and negative aspects of the dogs' shelters. How children would feel if they had to put the dog to the dogs' shelter.*



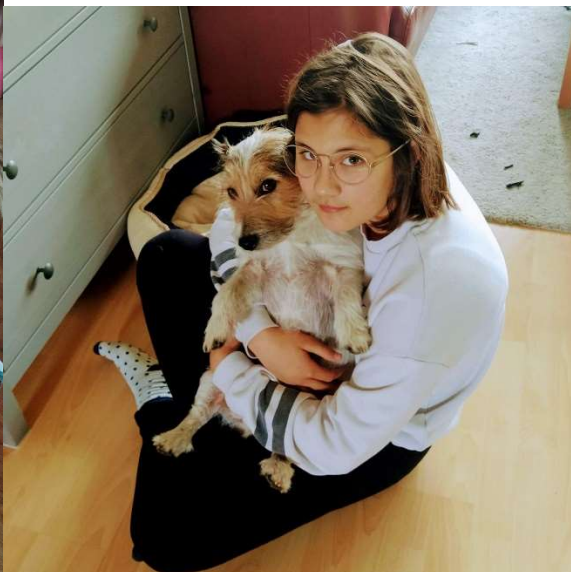
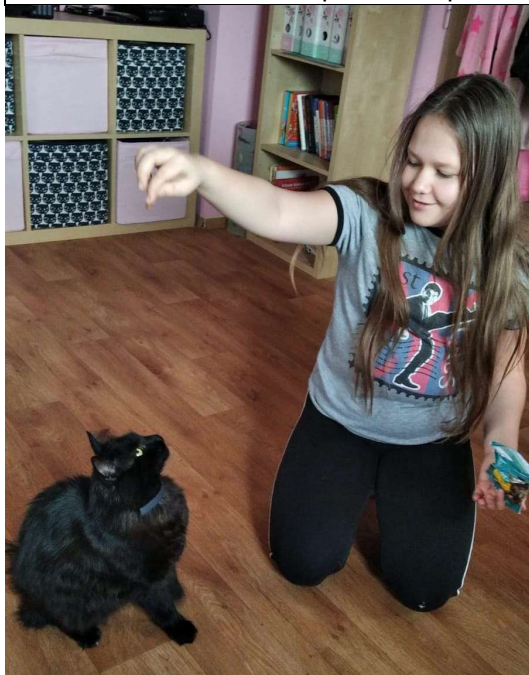


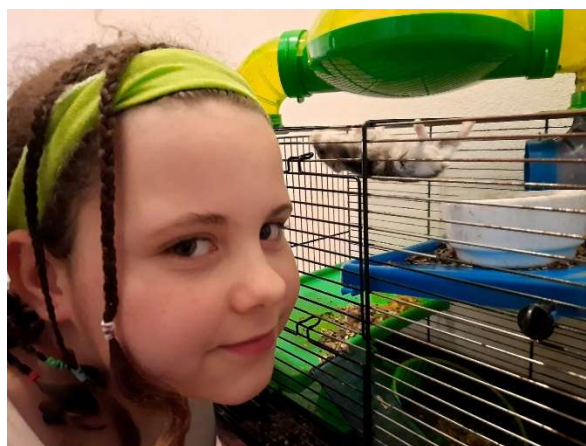


Pets as therapists – pets at home

The goal(s) of the activity:

To find out the importance of pets and their influence on children's emotional development. Each child who has a pet at home introduced their pet and presented what they liked on their pet. Other children discussed positive aspects of having a pet.





**Pets as therapists – An animal's day****The goal(s) of the activity:**

Children realize that animals are an integral part of our environment. To explain their feelings, problems they may face, to get to know that we have to protect the animals because they are part of our environment. Examples of ways as to how we can help.





Animal therapists	Age of children 3-6 (group of vulnerable children) 4-6
Dissemination: Parents Website of the institution e-Twinning Exhibition at the <i>Pedenjcarstvo</i> unit: parents and visitors	Goals: Sensory development Empathy development, thus building interpersonal relations Learning the right way to deal with animals
Activity description: <p>In the Pedenjped kindergarten, teachers and children are happy to open their doors to all types of animals. So we were visited by a stickleback, tadpoles, a dog and a rabbit, and on walks around the kindergarten our favorite spot is the barn with horses, goats and piglets.</p> <p>With the help of animals, we have a positive effect on a child's development. We touch the child, attract his attention and address him with sensory stimulations. In this way, we learn social skills, develop the field of communication and develop coarse and fine motor skills. Especially for children with sensory integration problems, physical contact with an animal offers a powerful experience and learning to regulate bodily responses. The child spontaneously regulates the entry of his body into the intimate space of the animal next to the animal: It is especially nice to observe a restless child who calms down while observing the animal and easily sits in a suitable sitting position. When watching a bunny, it is easier to lie down on a lounger and surprisingly fall asleep.</p> <p>By petting or touching an animal, the child feels the softness of the hair, the heartbeat and detects its smell. When feeding an animal, we learn to offer food to it in front of its snout, not to push it into its mouth or throw it on its head.</p> <p>Children learn empathy, because if a bunny or stick is squeezed too hard, it quickly shows pain. It is nice to observe how we do not need to tell this to the child. After the initial excitement, the children spontaneously calmed down in the body, began to imitate movement, and expressed the feelings of the animals.</p> <p>Playing with an animal is simple, full of fun situational elements, which, however, require the child to be flexible in movement and response. The toy is predictable, and in animals, children learn that you never know what kind of response you will encounter, and this develops flexibility in response and the ability to follow the communication initiative of another person (animal).</p> <p>Children with autism have difficulty maintaining eye contact, which is eliminated when handling and playing with an animal. Children bow on their own initiative and bring the face closer to the head of a bunny or dog and insist strongly on the look. When visiting a stickman, they ask where his eyes are. They clearly perceive and marvel at large ears, long paws, small and large tails.</p> <p>Interesting is the spontaneous empathic response of most children with autism and developmentally normative children to the plight of animals in the new environment, among a group of children. The children fell silent spontaneously and did not interfere excessively with the animal's personal space. Some children with a higher level of anxiety even identified with the animal and began to share tips on how to handle a frightened bunny and a stickleback and how the animal will be overcome by fear.</p>	



Photos: Animal visits

Fotogalerija: [Zivali na obisku](#)



FROG VISIT	Age of children: 5-6
Dissemination: children, parents.	Goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the presence of animals (in the classroom), children must exhibit calmness. - Reaching the point of being comfortable with touching a frog.
Description of activities: Our class was visited by a frog. Before that, we talked about the need to be calm, quiet in the presence of animals in the room. The children immediately calmed down when the caretaker brought the frog. The frog was first observed in a circle, and then those who wanted to do so, could also hold it in his hands, following the rules. Some did not even dare to touch the frog at first. The teacher gladly found out that they then slowly overcame their fear.	
  	



Activity title: Board game FLY PIG	Age of children: 4-6 years
Dissemination: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Erasmus corner in the wardrobe - eTwinning - group book in wardrobe 	Objective (s) of the activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthening peer promotion, cooperation and tolerance for others. - Performance in front of peers and strengthening vocabulary.
Activity description: <p>In the content section 'Caring for animals', children in the Blue Group got to know animals from our environment and beyond. We started with the game Fly, Fly Pigs. The game is based on finding animal traits while supporting images (has wings, flies, has a fin, 4 legs, 2 legs, tentacles, tail, mane, fur, sleeps hibernation). The children quickly mastered the game as they are old enough to recognize the most famous animals (horse, dog, cat, chicken, snail, frog, snake, witness, cow, bee...). Through play, they strengthened peer encouragement and collaboration, as play required peer help to achieve a goal. They enriched their vocabulary and performed in front of a group. The game is still in the corner where they play with it daily.</p>	
Photos:	






Activity title: Animal poster with parents	Age of children: 4 - 6 years
Dissemination: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Erasmus corner in the wardrobe - eTwinning - group book in wardrobe 	Objective (s) of the activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The child gets to know different types of animals. - The child lists the characteristics of individual animals. - The child works with the parent in the process of creating the poster. - The child performs in front of the group.
Activity description: <p>In the morning circle, the children drew a picture of an animal, which they took home with a blank sheet of paper. At home, together with the parent, they drew and described the selected animal. The activity was intended as a continuation of the game 'Fly Fly Pigs', which the children in the kindergarten mastered perfectly. The very next day, a few children brought a poster with their animal and a description. It was noticeable how the children enthusiastically, relaxed and proudly described the chosen animal. Over the next few days, the posters were brought by the other children and presented to the group. Posters are very different from each other, as each has its own style and content. Posters make our wardrobe look nice – a place where you can stop and learn something new about different animals.</p>	
Photos:	





Activity title: Visit of the dog LABI	Age of children: 4 - 6 years
Dissemination: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Erasmus corner in the wardrobe - eTwinning - group book in wardrobe 	Objective (s) of the activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The child reduces the fear of animals. - The child experiences a positive attitude towards the dog. - The child develops empathy and compassion for animals.
Activity description: <p>A twelve-year-old female dog named Labi, a Labrador breed, came to our playroom. Labi is a very calm dog, so she is very suitable for children. Despite the fact that the children of the "Blue Group" are numerous and loud, when the dog Labi arrived, they calmed down and watched her. The most restless children calmed down completely when they touched the animal and sat next to it for a long time. Of course, they touched the dog with their palms all the time. The children talked casually next to the animals, laughed and looked happy and content. Linda spent the whole day in the group and we noticed the day was more calm. The children developed confidence and comfort next to the animal.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Photos:</p> 	





Activity title: Frodo visiting kindergarten	Age of children: 4 - 6 years
Dissemination: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Erasmus corner in the wardrobe - eTwinning - e-bulletin board 	Objective (s) of the activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Getting to know and developing responsibilities and caring for animals. - Learning self-control or regulating one's emotions. - Reducing fear of animals. - Experiencing the comfort of contact with a dog.
Activity description: <p>I brought my dog Frodo to kindergarten, who is used of children and loves company and attention. Children were well prepared on his arrival. We talked about how to know a puppy, what he needs ... They enthusiastically accepted him. He was allowed to explore the space first, then greeted all the children by dog. Fear of animals was present in only one boy, but through the tricks Frodo showed, he overcame that fear. All the children who showed desire played with him, commanding him various commands, such as e.g. sit, lie down, give a paw, give a Friday, make a pass. They watched him with enthusiasm and caressed him gently. That day the children were more calm and quiet. They learned about all-day dog care. He was fed in kindergarten, then taken for a walk on a leash and cleaned up after he passed the need. They also gave him time to rest. They were very gentle to Frodo. After meeting him, he was artistically depicted using the technique of drawing with black charcoal.</p>	





Activity title: "PAW HELPERS" and a pet corner	Age of children: 4 - 6 years
Dissemination: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Erasmus corner in the wardrobe - eTwinning - e-bulletin board 	Objective (s) of the activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Getting to know the animals that care about the well-being of the weaker. - Learning defense techniques when in contact with a dangerous animal. - Getting acquainted with dog care. - Developing a positive attitude towards animals. - Working with parents-walking with a pet.
Activity description: <p>In the kindergarten, the children had the opportunity to meet a very calm and friendly therapeutic dog Linda, a chihuahua breed. Its owner from the association "PAW HELPERS" showed us what Linda knows, what she needs for well-being ... The children actively participated and very quickly won everything they needed. They led her on a leash, gave her treats, brushed and caressed her. They learned how to protect themselves from a possible dog attack. She also taught them that they should never look a foreign dog straight in the eye. The children were very gentle to Linda, no one was afraid of her, all the children were involved in the activity with her.</p> <p>In the following days, we then arranged a pet corner with the children in the kindergarten. The children brought their plush cat or dog to the kindergarten, made a collar for him, wrote down his name, built a house out of cubes... took care of the whole care and well-being of their pet. The result was a very enjoyable game, their conversation and interactions between them were very interesting.</p> <p>They went for a walk with their pet together with their parents. The one who didn't have a real animal took a plush puppy or kitten for a walk. They sent a photo and later we made a poster.</p>	



Photos:









Activity title: Collection of old blankets, pillows ... for a dog shelter	Age of children: 4-6 years
Dissemination: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Erasmus corner in the wardrobe of the kindergarten - eTwinning - e-bulletin board - WEB kindergarten 	Objective (s) of the activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Acquaintance with charity. The child learns to share things he does not need and gives them away. - Developing responsibility and caring for animals.
Activity description: I showed the children life in the Animal shelter Ljubljana through a short video. They learned that there were abandoned animals in the shelter that had no owners of their own. They are cared for by shelter staff and are looking for new owners for them. They are very happy for any help. They accept blankets, pillows, towels, food... Charity connects us, teaches us to love ourselves and others. Therefore, together with the children, we decided to offer a piece of help. Through the "Web Kindergarten", we wrote a letter to parents to help abandoned animals. The response from parents was very high. The children brought blankets, pillows and towels that they no longer needed, and they were proud that they too, were helping those in need.	





Activity title: Collage - my pet	Age of children: 4 - 6 years
Dissemination: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Erasmus corner in the wardrobe - exhibition of products in Litija - shop Stara šola - e-bulletin board 	Objective (s) of the activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deepening the topic in art techniques. - Getting to know the art technique - collage. Developing fine motor skills. - Getting used to proper scissor posture and shearing along the line.
Activity description: We deepened the topic we are talking about by making a collage - My pet. The children each chose their own photo of the pet and pasted it on a drawing sheet. They then drew with a pencil the gadgets their pet needs. They drew containers for feeding, food, crib ... all scraped and glued. Through art activities, they consolidated their knowledge about pets and enjoyed it.	





Activity title: Closing meeting on Sitarjevec	Age of children: 4 - 6 years
Dissemination: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Erasmus corner - eTwinning 	Objective (s) of the activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Joint celebration of the end of the kindergarten year. - Joint movement and relaxation play of children in nature.
Activity description: <p>Participants of all three groups met on the nearby hill Sitarjevec, where we were able to meet live for the first time after the psndemics. The kids were happy to be able to play with new friends. They were relaxed, enjoying free play and exploring the forest. They noticed changes in nature and commented on them with each other. They harvested elderberry, which we dried in the nursery and later brewed tea. Each group took care of the common well-being. The children from Group "Bees" brought water and juice, group "Blue room" brought apples and group "Butterflies" brought of salt sticks. We prepared a healthy picnic in nature. After lunch, we got in a circle, sang a few songs, and performed the "Squeeze in Greeting" game. The children hugged in a circle, closed their eyes, shook hands in greeting, and quietly listened to the pleasant voices from the forest. In good spirits and full of impressions, we each returned to our kindergarten.</p>	



**Activity title:**

A visit by a police officer with a dog

Age of children:

5 - 7 years

Dissemination:

- Erasmus corner
- eTwinning

Objective (s) of the activity:

- Getting to know the work of a police dog.
- Developing a positive attitude towards animals.


Activity description:

After visiting various animals (in the kindergarten or on the farm), we invited a police dog to the kindergarten. The police officer introduced us to training techniques and acquired skills. The children tested themselves in the role of assistant coach.

By getting to know the needs of animals, however, they developed an understanding that even a service dog is just an animal that needs care and a nice attitude.





Activity title: Visit to the ZOO Ljubljana	Age of children: 5 -7 years
Dissemination: - Erasmus corner	Objective (s) of the activity: - Developing a positive attitude towards animals. - Awareness of the diversity of fauna and flora (and the connection between the two).
Activity description: <p>We have already discovered the world and its diversity in previous activities. These are reflected in population, language, architecture, landscape, flora and fauna. We got to know and recognize the characteristics of the continents. We put special emphasis on flags and animals.</p> <p>By visiting the zoo, we tested ourselves in the already acquired knowledge and gained new insights about animals.</p>	
	



Activity title: Box of the world	Age of children: 5 -7 years
Dissemination: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - exhibition of products in Litija - store Stara šola - photos - eTwinning - product in the playroom 	Objective (s) of the activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Getting to know the world, its diversity (in population, language, architecture, landscape, flora and fauna) - Getting to know animals of the world.
Activity description: <p>We discovered the world and its diversity. These are reflected in population, language, architecture, landscape, flora and fauna. We got to know and recognize the characteristics of the continents. We put special emphasis on flags and animals.</p> <p>In one of the activities, we drew a map of the world together - emphasis on the sea and land (continents). In books and online, we used prior knowledge to discover typical animals for a particular part of the world. The children brought pictures of the animals from home, introduced them to friends, and together we pasted them on a specific part of the world on a map.</p> <p>Quite a few children know the continents and name them on different maps. They also know the animals that are characteristic of them and also the environment in which they live.</p>	





Exhibition: Project activities 2020/2021	Age of the children: 3-6 4-5
Dissemination: Parents Website of the institution e-Twinning	Goals: Project contents advertising Gaining positive self-image
Description of activities: Erasmus + Project L.I.F.E. (Live! Improve! Feel! Educate!) encourages development of children's social and emotional competencies. We integrate the contents of the project and the European development plan into the educational activities of the Carrots and Scholars departments, and at the same time we monitor the progress of our children in the field of emotional literacy. At the exhibition in the kindergarten, we shared photo snapshots of our activities and the results of the first year of the project with parents and the local community.	
