

TEACHING CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN AND OUT OF THE CLASSROOM - ANIMAL ASSISTED THERAPIES

Teacher: ILIANA LAZARI

Course Duration: one week, from Monday to Saturday, 30 hours

Number of Participants: Min. 6 – Max. 20

Course location: ATHENS



DESCRIPTION

This course has been designed for teachers who want to have a deeper understanding of the importance of school inclusion throughout children with special needs with innovative indoor and outdoor teaching practices and how animal assisted therapies can improve mentally and physically their everyday lives.

“We are all special” is the leading motto of this course. Nowadays, more and more children are being diagnosed with special needs so it is our priority to make contemporary schools more open and ready to include all kind of children in their community. One of the main goals of this course is to create strategies that will prevent those students from isolation, labeling and bullying and make their integration smoother. We will also discuss about the benefits of animal assisted therapies and how we can make them more approachable to the students. There will be both theory and practice during this course so that teachers will understand the main learning and behavioral disorders and how they can adapt their lessons in order to fit the needs of each student. Course participants will be invited to journal their experiences during the course, share knowledge and work into groups with cooperation, fun and respect.

Participants will leave the course full of knowledge and new practices to promote inclusive schools with respect in the needs of each student. They will be more open-minded to the diversity of students and more effective in their communication skills that will lead to better learning results, reduction of bullying and creation of a more positive climate in school.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Participants to the course will learn to:

- Deeply understanding of the main learning disabilities (dyslexia, dyspraxia, etc) and emotional disorders (anxiety, depression, etc)
- Learning how to adapt their teaching practices based on the needs of each student
- Creating techniques in order to share awareness to their students about the special needs and how important is respect and equality
- Promoting the idea of the beneficial animal assisted therapies through kids with special needs
- Preventing isolation, stigma and bullying in the school community
- Practicing effective and positive communication with students and parents
- Learning how to empower peer interaction and support to every kind of student
- Improving basic digital competences in outdoor education
- Integrating ICT tools in outdoor education

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PROGRAM

Monday

- Introduction of the course and the participants
- Ice-break group dynamics
- Setting goals for participants
- Presentations of the participants' schools
- Criteria for an inclusive school

Tuesday

- Theory about the main special educational needs and behavioral disorders
- Presentation of cases
- Working in groups in order to create strategies to promote peer interaction and support
- Presenting movement-based activities and relaxation techniques to improve behavior
- Practicing innovative and functional ways of communication with parents

Wednesday

- Learning efficient ways to teach students with Specific Learning Disabilities
- Promoting learning techniques and strategies for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Role playing regarding bullying, communication, respect between students

- Presenting beneficial teaching and managing techniques for students with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder and Developmental Delay
- Creating Behavior Intervention Plan -> Practical group activity aiming to promote positive behavior in students with emotional or behavioral disorders based on a case study
- Promoting the idea of animal assisted therapies to the children with special needs

Thursday

- Sharing experiences of outdoor education
- Learning how to use ICT in education
- Presentation of digital tools that can be used in outdoor teaching
- Creating innovative teaching materials by working in groups

Friday

- Game -> Escape room in the city. Exploration and treasure hunt in Athens
- Course evaluation from participants - acquired competences, feedback and discussion
- Awarding Certificate of Attendance

Saturday

- Cultural tour in Athens